

Holland Road Baptist Church

Safe to Belong

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Safeguarding in context

1.1 What Is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the protection of adults and children from harm, abuse or neglect.

We all have the same rights and expectations to independence, respect, choice, fulfilment of our ambitions, to be heard, included, and to have privacy and confidentiality. These expectations are central to the way in which we interact with each other in our life together. Safeguarding involves a range of activities aimed at promoting the individual's fundamental right to be safe. These include making and maintaining safe environments for all, having processes to follow should something go wrong, and support for everyone involved.

1.2 The Theology Of Safeguarding

Each and every person is fearfully and wonderfully made, knitted together in their mother's womb, and loved by God who knows everything about them (Psalm 139). All are precious and have worth to God. Therefore the church should strive to be a place of welcome, inclusion and care for all – no matter their age, abilities, health or history.

Jesus tells us that we are each called to love others and to treat them with the respect, dignity and love that we would want to receive ourselves (Matthew 22: 39). Therefore the church should always aim to be a place of care, compassion and love.

There are many examples of Jesus bringing healing and comfort to people in pain and discomfort, those isolated and alone. At the sight of people in distress he is filled with compassion (Mark 1:41). Therefore the church should strive to be a place of healing, comfort and hope – no matter what the cause of suffering and sorrow.

Jesus was not afraid of challenging injustice and inequality, nor of confronting ignorance and arrogance. He sought out and spent time with marginalised people and he spoke passionately for those who had no voice (Matthew 23). Therefore the church should strive

to be a place of righteousness, advocacy and justice, speaking up for people who are oppressed and abused – no matter how costly that may be.

Safeguarding is the protection of adults and children from harm, abuse, fear or neglect. If we believe that all people are precious in the eyes of God, their creator; if we believe that as Christians we should follow the example of Jesus in his compassion and care for others; if we believe that the church should be a sanctuary of safety and peace; and if we believe that we as Christians should speak out against injustice, then safeguarding should be an automatic part of our church communities – as we strive to protect all people from harm, abuse, fear or neglect and to love, care and support all who have been affected by such damaging behaviour.

**“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
(John 13: 35 – NIV)**

1.3 Safeguarding at HRBC

The church recognises its responsibilities for the Safeguarding of all adults at risk, defined by the Baptist Union as ‘any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental capacity and understanding, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation’. The church commits annually to the following five actions:

1. The church is committed to the safeguarding of adults at risk and ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.
2. The church recognises that it is the responsibility of each of us to do our best to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of adults at risk and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
3. The church is committed to providing pastoral care and support to those who have experienced abuse.
4. The church undertakes to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with adults at risk.
5. The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.

The Safeguarding Trustee oversees and monitors implementation of the Safe to Belong Policy and Procedures on behalf of the church's charity trustees. The Designated Persons Team advises the church on any matters related to the Safeguarding of children/young people and adults at risk and are responsible for taking the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected. This Safeguarding Team can be contacted on safeguarding@hrbc.org.uk or via the Church Office on 01273 732111.

Any safeguarding incidents should be reported using the Incident Report Form, in liaison with a Designated Person

The Safe to Belong Policy

What is Safe to Belong?

This document is a safeguarding policy and procedures guide for the Baptist Union of Great Britain, focused on protecting and serving adults at risk.

The document is made up of a policy statement, procedures and guidance, which covers: -

- Why we think safeguarding adults is important;
- What to do if you know of or suspect abuse;
- How to make your church a safe and welcoming environment for all.

The aims of the document are:

- To highlight what the Baptist Union of Great Britain believes and expects for adults at risk within the church and local community.
- To raise awareness and understanding of the issue of abuse.
- To help to create a safe environment, free from the fears of being abused or taken advantage of in any way.
- To act as a signpost to other, more specialised services and information.

Who is this document for?

This document is for everyone in your church, but especially for church workers who have some responsibility for working with or supporting adults at risk. This includes ministers, deacons, lay workers and volunteers. This document is also for your church's Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Designated Person for Safeguarding

Each church should have a Designated Person for Safeguarding who is the initial point of contact for all your church's safeguarding requirements for adults at risk. This could be the same person who covers safeguarding for children, or a separate role.

It is preferable to have a Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding, in case the lead person is unavailable.

The Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding must attend local association safeguarding training to give them the confidence and skills to carry out their role within a church setting even if they have attended secular safeguarding training because of their work or professional background. This ensures everyone across the Baptist Union is operating to the same standards of excellence in safeguarding.

They have responsibility for:

- Advocating for safeguarding within the church
- Maintaining the church safeguarding policy and procedures
- Ensuring church workers are safely recruited and receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Responding appropriately to any concerns
- Liaising with their Association Safeguarding Contact
- Co-operating with the relevant statutory authorities.

Who are adults at risk?

The term 'adult at risk' has replaced the previously used 'vulnerable adult', focusing on the situation rather than the characteristics of the adult themselves. The label 'vulnerable adult' may wrongly imply that some of the fault for any abuse lies with the abused adult.

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy we are using the following simple definition taken from CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service):

Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

Some adults might be more at risk than others, and there are some times in life where risks may increase. Some of these circumstances may include:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty (especially if it creates a dependency on or needing help from others)
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Illness
- Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication
- Bereavement
- Past abuse or trauma
- English is not their first language

Churches and faith-based organisations provide many activities for their congregations and local communities which might bring them into contact with adults who may be at risk. These may include:

- Lunch clubs
- Food banks and debt advice
- Pastoral visiting
- Working with homeless people (soup kitchens, etc.)
- Outreach work providing assistance to those who are vulnerable (Street Angels / Street Pastors, etc.)
- Supporting refugees or asylum seekers
- Counselling
- Drug or alcohol support groups
- Supporting those who are subject to domestic abuse
- Community cafes and / or shops within the church
- Day to day contact with people we meet within our churches or faith communities

Recognising abuse

What is abuse?

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons.

It comes from the misuse of power and control that someone has over another. Harm is the result of this mistreatment or abuse.

Abuse may consist of one single act or many repeated acts, and it can occur in any relationship at any time of life. It can take many forms, not just physical or violent acts, but it may also be verbal, sexual, psychological, spiritual or financial. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act. Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

Who could abuse?

Abuse may be perpetrated by an individual or a group. Those who may abuse include

- A partner, child, relative or friend
- A paid or volunteer carer
- A health, social care or other worker
- A church worker or minister of religion

Abuse can be committed by one adult at risk towards another. This is still abuse and should be handled appropriately.

Where could abuse happen?

Abuse can take place in all kinds of different settings. For example:

- At home
- In supported housing
- At someone else's home
- Within a nursing home, hospital, residential care or day care
- At work or in educational establishments
- In a church
- In a car or other vehicle
- Online or via mobile communications

Types of abuse

What are the different types of abuse?

There is no single definition for each different type of abuse, with different terminology used by different organisations. Using many different sources we have compiled a simple definition for each of the main types of abuse, along with some of the behaviours that each type of abuse may include. This information is shown in the following table.

<u>Abuse</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Includes</u>
Physical	To inflict pain, physical injury or suffering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hitting, slapping and beating; - Shaking, pinching and pushing; - Kicking, burning and hair pulling; - Squeezing, suffocating, poisoning and using inappropriate restraint. - Giving inappropriate medication - Starvation or overfeeding
Emotional	<p>The use of threats, fear or power gained by another adult's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes.</p> <p>Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological distress. All forms of abuse have an emotional component.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mocking, coercing, threatening or controlling behaviour; - Bullying, intimidation, harassment or humiliation; - The lack of privacy or choice, denial of dignity, deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation; - Making someone feel worthless, a lack of love or affection, or ignoring the person.
Sexual	<p>Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour.</p> <p>No one should enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting; - Indecent assault, incest, being forced to touch another person in a sexual manner without consent; - Making sexual remarks, suggestions and teasing; - Indecent exposure, being forced to watch pornographic material or sexual acts; - Enforced or coerced nakedness or inappropriate

<u>Abuse</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Includes</u>
		<p>photography of a person in sexually explicit ways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being spied on while a person is undertaking personal care activities.
Neglect	<p>A person's wellbeing is impaired and their care needs are not met. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services; - Ignoring medical or physical care needs, including withholding medication, or not giving someone proper food or assistance with eating or drinking; - Failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult (particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess the risks to themselves or to others); - Failing to provide a warm, safe and comfortable environment. - Deliberately withholding aids, such as walking sticks or hearing aids. - Denying social, religious or cultural contacts, or denying contact with the family; - Leaving alone or unsupervised.
Financial	<p>The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theft, fraud or embezzlement of monies, benefits or goods; - Exploitation or profiteering; - Applying pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance, or financial transactions; - The abuse of influence, power or friendship to persuade a person to make gifts or change their will; - Being charged excessive amounts for services (such as minor building works on a property).
Spiritual	<p>The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context; the abuse of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forcing religious ideas or practices onto people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices;

<u>Abuse</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Includes</u>
	trust by someone in a position of spiritual authority (e.g. minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extreme pastoral interference in personal matters – reducing individual choice and responsibility; - The misuse of scripture or power to control behaviour and pressure to conform; - The requirement of obedience to the abuser, or the suggestion that the abuser has a “divine” position; - Intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in people experiencing emotional, physical or sexual harm; - The denial of the right of faith or opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God; - Exclusion of people to the full range of church life (no arrangements for gluten-free wafers or non-alcoholic wine at Communion, or fear of involving those who are HIV positive).
Discriminatory	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ageist, racist, sexist, or abusive behaviour based on a person’s disability; - Abuse linked to a person’s sexuality; - Harassment, slurs or similar treatment; - Withholding services without proper justification, or lack of disabled access to services and activities.
Institutional	<p>The mistreatment or abuse of an adult by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment.</p> <p>The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The inability of an institution to safeguard people from emotional or even physical harm and neglect; - Having fixed rules and routines by which people are controlled; - People being prevented from doing things that are their rights; - Not having access to personal possessions or personal allowance.

Abuse does not have to fit solely into any one of the categories, and often more than one type of abuse may be taking place.

Other forms of abuse

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can affect anybody regardless of their age, gender, sexuality or social status.

Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual or psychological, and whatever form it takes, it is rarely a one-off incident. Usually there is a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour where an abuser seeks to exert power over their family member or partner.

For more information on domestic abuse, see the 'BUGB Guide to Domestic Abuse' (publication date: 1 March 2016) or speak to the BUGB Safeguarding Team.

Cyber abuse (also known as cyber bullying or cyber stalking)

The use of information technology (email, mobile phones, websites, social media, instant messaging, chatrooms, etc.) to repeatedly harm or harass other people in a deliberate manner.

For more information on cyber abuse, see the 'BUGB Guide to Cyber Safety' (publication date: 1 December 2015) or speak to the BUGB Safeguarding Team.

Self-harm/self-neglect

Self-harm is the intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is used as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress. An adult at risk may also be neglecting themselves, which can result in harm to themselves.

For more information on dealing with issues of self-harm, see the 'BUGB Guide to Self-Harm' (publication date: 1 January 2016) or speak to the BUGB Safeguarding Team.

Mate crime

'Mate crime' is when people (particularly those with learning disabilities) are befriended by members of the community, who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.

Modern slavery

Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery and trafficking. It is illegal in every country of the world.

Human trafficking

Human trafficking is when people are bought and sold for financial gain and/or abuse. Men, women and children can be trafficked, both within their own countries and over international borders. The traffickers will trick, coerce, lure or force these vulnerable individuals into sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.

Radicalisation

The radicalisation of individuals is the process by which people come to support any form of extremism and, in some cases, join terrorist groups. Some adults are more vulnerable to the risk of being groomed (see glossary) into terrorism than others.

Honour marriage/forced marriage

An honour marriage / forced marriage is when one or both of the spouses do not, or cannot, consent to the marriage. There may be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure exerted in order to make the marriage go ahead. The motivation may include the desire to control unwanted behaviour or sexuality.

Historic abuse

Historic abuse is the term used to describe disclosures of abuse that were perpetrated in the past. Many people who have experienced abuse don't tell anyone what happened until years later, with around one third of people abused in childhood waiting until adulthood before they share their experience.

If you are concerned about an adult at risk experiencing one of these forms of abuse, please contact your church Designated Person for Safeguarding Team, who will follow the necessary safeguarding procedures. They may also contact the Association Safeguarding Contact for advice.

How to respond to abuse or concerns

Responding to abuse

This section will help you know what to do if you know or suspect an adult is being abused or may be at risk of abuse, or you have concerns about their wellbeing. It is often not easy to recognise abuse or harm. Therefore it is important to act if you suspect abuse – don't wait until you are absolutely sure. This doesn't mean that you are jumping to conclusions or making judgements about the situation, it simply means that there is a safeguarding concern. You may suspect abuse because:

- You have a general concern about someone's wellbeing
- You see or hear something which could be abusive
- Someone tells you that something has happened or is happening to them, or to an adult at risk, which could be abusive.

In these circumstances, do not delay. Pass on your concerns to your church Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours. If they are not available or are implicated in the concern, speak to another member of your church safeguarding team (if applicable) or get in touch with your Local Association Safeguarding Contact. If an adult is in imminent danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services on 999 without delay.

If someone discloses abuse directly to you, then remember to:

- **Listen** Take what is said seriously
- **Reassure** Tell them that they have done the right thing by telling you, and that you believe them
- **Remain Calm** No matter how difficult it is to listen to what is being disclosed. You have been chosen because the person feels able to talk to you
- **Be honest** Do not promise full confidentiality or offer false reassurance
- **Be open** Do not ask leading or closed questions, such as "Did she hit you?" It is not your role to investigate. As soon as you have enough information to concern you, stop probing.
- **Ask** Request their consent to share information and seek help
- **Explain** Tell them that you are going to tell 'x' the Designated Person for Safeguarding (or an appropriate alternative if necessary – see above) and give them a timescale
- **Write** Document everything the adult at risk has told you, in their own words. You will need to record the questions you asked as well as the answers or information given. This should be done as soon as possible after the disclosure and should include the time and date; Report Contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours (or appropriate alternative if necessary– see above) and report the disclosure
- **Keep quiet** The concerns you have should be kept confidential between you, the adult concerned, the Designated Person for Safeguarding (and the church safeguarding team, if applicable). The Designated Person for Safeguarding may need to inform the Association Safeguarding Contact and the statutory authorities.

Never go and talk to the alleged abuser or try to investigate the allegations yourself.

Communication difficulties

Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language, communication skills and disability. You may need to ask the person to repeat themselves or to check that you have understood what they said.

If you have concerns, witness the abuse of someone or have seen changes in behaviour or living patterns that make you suspect that someone is being abused, it is important that you don't ignore what you have seen or suspect. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse of any kind, and there is help and support available to put a stop to it. But remember that it is not your job to investigate; as soon as you have enough information you should implement your church safeguarding policy and procedures.

Statutory authorities

If the police or Adult Social Care Services are contacted then the Association Safeguarding Contact should be informed as soon as possible afterwards. This should be done by the local church Designated Person for Safeguarding, even if they weren't the person to whom the disclosure was made

Safeguarding incident form

The Safeguarding Incident Form should be completed as accurately as possible, and within 24 hours after the disclosure or suspicions of abuse. Where possible use the person's own words, sticking to the facts and avoiding opinion. You will need to record what questions were asked as well as the answers or information given.

Please remember that it is not your role to verify or prove that the information given is true. It is simply your role to listen, record and report any concerns, allegations or disclosures to the appropriate people. This is true no matter who the alleged abuser is.

Mental capacity

Within safeguarding, mental capacity is whether or not someone has the capacity or ability to make decisions about themselves and their safety and well-being. There is a fine balance between the individual's rights to autonomy and their need for protection.

If there are any concerns about the mental capacity of an adult at risk, always refer to your local authority Adult Social Care Services for advice.

What if the adult doesn't want help?

The mental capacity of the adult at risk is vital in deciding what should be done. All actions should be based on the assumption that the individual has the capacity and the right to make their own choices in relation to their personal safety and well-being. This includes upholding their right to follow a course of action which others may deem unwise or eccentric, including staying in a situation of abuse.

If the adult at risk doesn't want help it may still be necessary to inform the police or Adult Social Care Services, who can put a safeguarding plan in place so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected. This is particularly important:

- When the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
- When there is a risk of harm to others
- In order to prevent a crime

If at all unsure of whether or not to pass on information about abuse without permission, the Designated Person for Safeguarding should contact your Association Safeguarding Contact for advice. It is also important that the individual knows where to get appropriate help and support if they should change their mind.

What happens next?

If a referral is made to Adult Social Care Services about a disclosure of abuse it is known as an adult safeguarding alert. Firstly they will check to see if the adult at risk or alleged abuser is known to them. If the individual(s) are known, then details of the disclosure will be passed on to the social worker involved, who, with their manager, will decide what action should be taken next. If the individuals are not known to Adult Social Care Services then it is likely that a duty worker and manager will make the decision of what to do next, possibly liaising with the police.

If there is an urgent need for the adult at risk to be protected, to be found alternative accommodation or for any other safety measures to be put in place, they will be given priority. If the adult at risk is in immediate danger of physical harm or their life is threatened, then it is appropriate for you to bypass Adult Social Care Services and contact the police for help.

Following the initial referral to Adult Social Care Services and the creation of an adult safeguarding alert, a referral will be made to the local adult protection officer, who will start to investigate the alleged abuse. They will liaise with the adult at risk and discuss options and procedures and find out what the individual wants to happen. The adult protection officer will involve other agencies as necessary, to ensure a coordinated response to the alleged abuse.

The outcome will be communicated to the local Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). Safeguarding Adults Boards are multi-agency groups (which may include Adult Social Care Services, the police, and Crown Prosecution Service, health services, Quality Care Commission and voluntary organisations) who work in partnership to promote and develop effective protection systems for adults at risk in their locality.

Generally, families will be informed when there is an allegation of abuse and what action is being taken. However, there are a few circumstances which may prevent this communication from happening. These include:

- If the adult at risk does not wish their family to be informed
- If the alleged abuser is a member of the family
- If a police investigation is likely to take place

This process can be daunting and if at any stage the adult at risk wants someone to support them and help them through the process, then independent advocates are available through Adult Social Care Services.

Ministering to those who have experienced abuse

There are many adults within the church who are suffering from the effects of abuse. The church has a responsibility to support these people, no matter what form of abuse they have suffered; whether they suffered abuse as children or as adults; whether it was prolonged abuse or a one-off attack; or even whether the abuse seems trivial to the onlooker.

The effects of abuse

The impact of abuse on a person will be specific to them. It will depend upon their personal circumstances, now and at the time of the abuse, as well as the nature of the abuse suffered and the identity of the abuser. The abuse may have a lasting effect for the rest of their life and they may show a range of symptoms including:

- Depression
- Anger and hostility
- Being unable to connect at all with their feelings
- Low self-esteem, putting themselves down and constantly apologising
- Being unable to form close relationships, or at the other extreme, wanting to be inappropriately close to others
- Disturbed sleep and nightmares
- Fears, phobias and anxiety
- Flashbacks of the abuse
- Self-harming
- Feelings of guilt and shame
- Using alcohol, drugs or medication
- Finding themselves in an abusive cycle, moving from one abuser to another
- Seeking permission before being able to do anything
- Fear of becoming an abuser themselves
- Loss of trust in others

However, it is worth remembering that not all survivors of abuse will show symptoms of their abuse, and some may cope well with life and are able to live apparently 'normal' lives.

Pastoral care

It is common for those who have been abused to lose their trust in those around them. This is likely to affect their faith as well as their relationships with others. There is no quick-fix to heal the damage caused by abuse, and it is crucial that those who have been abused are given space and time to go through their own healing process.

One of the most important things to remember is that survivors need someone to listen to them; to believe them. They may need to repeat their story time and again, needing it to be heard in different contexts at different times over the years, in order for them to process their experience.

It is important that survivors:

- Are accepted for who they are, without them being made to forgive or being put into a position of feeling guilty and responsible for what happened to them
- Know that God loves them unconditionally, and that nothing can or will change this truth.

- Can be confident that those in the church community who know about the abuse, are with them on their journey – no matter how long or difficult that journey may be.

It is often necessary for the survivor of abuse to seek professional counselling as they work through their experiences. You may like to compile a list of relevant local information and contacts, ready for anyone who may need it. Contact details for national organisations can be found in Appendix 5.

For more information on supporting survivors of abuse, please see the 'BUGB Guide to Supporting Those Who Have Experienced Abuse' (publication date: 1 February 2016) or speak to the BUGB Safeguarding Team.

Making a safer church

Planning ahead

These good practice guidelines are not about rules and regulations in order to prevent you from doing things. They are about working together to enable all people to get more out of their church and community life in safe and enjoyable ways.

It is not possible to guard against every eventuality or protect those adults at risk from every potential harm or abuse by cruel and abusive people. However, churches can do their best to provide a safe place for everyone, including adults at risk, by making sure that they follow good practice guidelines in every area of church life.

Throughout this section the term “church workers” refers to ministers, deacons, lay workers and volunteers – basically anyone who has a role working within the church, whether paid or unpaid.

Premises

Church buildings should be as accessible as possible to all people, recognising the limitations that the age and design of some buildings may cause. Any restrictions to access, visibility, audibility, toilet facilities, lighting or heating should be addressed and where necessary aids and adaptations should be put in place.

Many of these points will have already been considered during health and safety checks that are carried out to meet legislative requirements.

Language

The language people use can often reflect their attitudes and opinions of others. In addition it should be considered that negative and uncaring attitudes can be a major barrier to accessing church life. This can include the language used within worship (for example referring to God as a father or lover can be difficult for some, and words like mankind and brotherhood exclude others) or the language used to describe people (such as derogatory words focusing on aspects of someone’s disability, race or sexuality rather than the person themselves). Therefore every effort should be taken to use appropriate language and suitable vocabulary, enabling the greatest level of inclusivity and accessibility.

Worship

Depending on the needs of your congregation and community, you may want to hold services which specifically cater for certain groups of adults at risk, such as those with learning disabilities, the deaf or the visually impaired. If doing so, it is important to include members of these groups in the planning and possibly the delivery of the service. Consider aspects such as the language used, the pace of the service and the physical layout of the room, remembering that the purpose of worshipping and meeting with God is no different from a ‘normal’ service.

In all worship services consideration should be given to the wide range of requirements within a congregation.

Some examples include:

- Providing some copies of large print type for all printed materials
- Speakers always facing the congregation and not covering their mouths when talking, enabling those who rely on lip-reading
- Describing what is being presented on a screen for those who cannot see it clearly
- The use of inclusive language
- Using a variety of liturgy and resources to cater for different levels of education and understanding
- Using a microphone during times of open prayer so that all can hear
- Use of sign language

Insurance

Most insurance policies require churches to take reasonable steps to safeguard adults at risk. If the insurance company deems that these steps have not been taken, it may invalidate the church's insurance policy and leave the trustees liable for any losses incurred. Insurance providers may request proof that a church's safeguarding policy is in place and being followed, before they will provide cover for the church. It is therefore advised that churches contact their insurance provider for specific guidance on their requirements.

Financial integrity

Clear and transparent systems should be put into place to prevent the possibility of financial irregularities occurring within the church context. Any allegations of financial discrepancies may be based on misunderstanding or confusion, therefore having clear processes in place will help to protect church workers as well as any adults at risk.

- Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts or other evidence of what has been done.
- Church workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary or recognised allowances or expenses.
- Church workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Any gifts received should be reported to the deacons and elders, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.
- Any money received by the church should be handled by two unrelated lay people.
- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk, such as the recently bereaved.
- Church workers should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart to avoid any conflict of interest.
- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the deacons.
- We strongly recommend that church workers (including ministers) should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests.

Churches may find it helpful to write down their arrangements for dealing with money, financial transactions and gifts, making sure that everyone is aware of the procedures to follow. If so, include this in your safeguarding procedures.

There are several legal procedures which may be used to protect the financial and business affairs of adults at risk, such as Power of Attorney and Appointeeship. Expert legal advice should be sought to ensure that the situation is clearly understood and is the most appropriate course of action for the adult at risk.

Photographs

With mobile phones and tablets with cameras, it is very easy to take pictures and immediately upload them to the internet. Make sure that you have the person's permission to take a picture, and if you intend to upload it, make sure that they're happy for people to see it online. If the person is not physically or mentally able to give meaningful permission or consent, then take extra care and ask a parent or responsible carer. When taking group pictures remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed. Without adult consent, it is not permissible to take photos of anyone under the age of 18.

Bear in mind that there may be many reasons why someone doesn't want their picture on public display, from simply not liking their photo being taken, to not wanting an abusive ex-partner to be able to identify their current location.

Computers

If your church has computers which others may have access to, make sure that there are suitable parental controls and blocks put on. Although this is not failsafe, it will make using the computers for inappropriate behaviour more difficult, whilst also protecting any vulnerable users. It is wise to create a policy specifically for church computer use, including terms and conditions for use as well as what will happen if someone breaches these conditions, such as using the computer to look at pornography or to send abusive messages.

For some useful contacts who can help you with issues around computer and internet safety and for more information on cyber abuse, see the 'BUGB Guide to Cyber Safety' (available on the Baptists Together website from 1 December 2015).

Safe recruiting

Safe recruitment should apply to all roles within the church or church organisations where there is work with or for adults at risk. It doesn't matter whether the role is paid or voluntary, and it doesn't matter if you have known the potential worker for many years.

As recruiting safely is a key element in safeguarding adults at risk, it should be part of your wider safeguarding responsibilities and procedures rather than simply an administrative human resources process. Recruitment to positions of trust should be carried out carefully to ensure that those who work with adults at risk are carefully chosen, supported and supervised, and to try to prevent inappropriate appointments being made.

We advise that churches use the following process in recruiting:

- Write a simple job profile
- Ask prospective employees / volunteers to complete an application form
- Take up references
- Interview the candidate
- Carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (where applicable)
- Ask them to sign an employment contract or volunteer agreement
- Offer ongoing training and supervision

Step 1. Write a simple job profile

This will help you to clarify what it is that you want doing and the kind of person you want to do it.

Step 2. Ask prospective employees / volunteers to complete an application form

This will give you an opportunity to find out more about the candidate(s) and their life and experience outside of the church. Don't assume you know about someone just because they have been coming to your church for years.

Step 3. Take up references

This will allow you to find out more about the candidate(s) from those who know them well and have worked with them in a similar area of work. At least one reference should be from someone outside of the church community. Don't assume you know what someone is like outside of the church environment.

Step 4. Interview the candidate

This will give you a further opportunity to get to know them, as well as explaining the role in more detail and giving them the chance to ask any questions.

Step 5. Carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, where applicable

This allows you to check the candidate's criminal background, and to discover whether or not they are allowed to work with adults at risk. This is assuming the role that they are applying for requires a DBS check. For more information on which roles enable you to gain a criminal records check, please see the section on DBS.

Step 6. Ask them to sign an employment contract or volunteer agreement when you have agreed to take them on

This will clarify exactly what the person is expected to do by setting out the roles and responsibilities of the job (whether paid or voluntary) and the name of the person who will supervise them. This can also include a self-disclosure for them to sign.

Step 7. Offer ongoing training and supervision

This training should be in the protection of adults at risk as well as any other skills necessary for the job. This training will first and foremost protect the adults at risk, and in doing so will also protect the workers themselves. The BU Safeguarding Contact can give details of training in your local area.

When recruiting for a role working with or for adults at risk, treat each candidate as though you don't know them. Don't assume that the short time you may have spent with them each week at church means that you know all about someone, their skills and abilities or working practices.

Leaders of groups which work with or for adults at risk should inform the church deacons and elders at an early stage when new employees or volunteers are required. That way the process can be followed correctly.

Young people aged 16 or 17 years who are assisting as helpers, should be appointed in the same way as adults, but will need their parent's permission and should only undertake roles where adult supervision will be in place at all times.

Safe recruitment practices are not about being suspicious, but are there to protect all people involved with or linked to the job concerned.

Training

All those working with adults at risk should receive safeguarding training as soon as possible after they are appointed to their role. This training should include:

- Training specific to their role (which may include specific issues relating to the type of adults at risk in question)
- Recognising possible signs of abuse specific to adults at risk
- When and how to report any concerns
- The name and contact details of the Designated Person for Safeguarding in the local church
- A code of behaviour for workers

We encourage churches to use the safeguarding training provided through the local Baptist associations as this has been specifically designed to reflect safeguarding in a church context. We recommend that safeguarding training should be completed every three years in order to keep workers refreshed and up to date with practices and procedures.

Record keeping

It is good practice to record pastoral visits or meetings, noting the date, time, location, subject and any actions which are to be taken. The record of these meetings should stick to facts and try to avoid opinion. Any records of safeguarding allegations, concerns or disclosures should be stored in a safe and secure manner for at least 75 years. Please speak to your church Designated Person for Safeguarding if you have records that need to be stored for this purpose.

Confidentiality

With adults at risk, confidentiality means that someone's personal business is not discussed with others, except with their permission. This is not always possible when considering passing relevant information about abuse or concerns to the Designated Person for Safeguarding, the statutory authorities or the local association. However, it is possible to keep the information confidential to the relevant parties. This means not telling or hinting to others what someone has disclosed, not even for prayer ministry.

Pastoral relationships

All those involved in pastoral ministry should work in a way that follows clearly defined procedures agreed by the church. These procedures should set out the boundaries for pastoral care so that all parties can understand their position and that they protect those carrying out the pastoral ministry as well as those receiving it.

They may include:

- Workers should be aware of the power imbalance within pastoral relationships and the potential for abuse of trust.
- Behaviour that suggests favouritism or gives the impression of a special relationship, should be avoided.
- Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency within a pastoral relationship.
- Workers should never take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with someone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- All people receiving pastoral ministry should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to make their own decisions about any actions or outcomes.
- Workers should not pastorally minister to anyone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Workers should recognise the limits of their own abilities and competencies, and they should not hesitate to get further help when working with situations outside of their expertise or role.

Roles and responsibilities

Below is a table outlining the roles and responsibilities of different people within the church, who have responsibility for adult safeguarding:

<u>Role</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>How</u>
Designated Person for Safeguarding	The recognised person for receiving disclosures or reports of disclosures of abuse.	Displaying name and contact information, preferably with photo, so church members know who to contact.
	Liaising with the Association Safeguarding Contact and external agencies where necessary.	Creating a list of contact numbers and having blank copies of the Safeguarding Incident Form ready to go.
	Keep the safeguarding policy relevant and up to date.	Annually review and update if necessary
	Advocating and facilitating safe church practices.	Promoting a culture of best practice throughout the church life.
	Report to the church meeting on safeguarding issues.	Make sure safeguarding is on the church meeting agenda.
DBS Verifier	Making sure that all relevant persons working with adults at	Coordinating the completion and renewal of DBS forms, and liaising with the Designated

<u>Role</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>	<u>How</u>
	risk have an up to date DBS check in place at all times.	Person(s) for Safeguarding on the outcomes when required.
Minister	Support and assisting the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding.	Regular communication with the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding, particularly if a serious incident arises.
Church Meeting	Adopt the safeguarding policy and procedures annually.	Discussing and agreeing the policy and procedures brought by the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding.
Safeguarding Trustee/Deacon	Taking the lead on safeguarding matters on behalf of the trustees/deacons.	Regular communication and reporting from the Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding and ensuring safeguarding is on the agenda at trustee meetings.
Trustees/Deacons of local church	Responsible for safeguarding best practice within the church	Make sure that all necessary safeguarding measures are in place (including policy, procedures, training, safe recruiting, etc.).

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The Disclosure and Barring Service is a government agency which provides information about employees' and volunteers' criminal record history, so that employers are able to make safer recruitment decisions. They check if an individual has any criminal convictions, if they are barred from working with children or adults at risk and if the police hold any other relevant information about that person. The DBS service was previously called the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). CRB checks have now been replaced by DBS checks.

It is a criminal offence to try and get work when barred, employ someone when barred, and not to pass on information that may lead to someone being barred.

In working with adults at risk, Enhanced DBS checks with a barred list check are only available for workers (volunteers as well as paid staff) if they are undertaking specific roles or duties. These are known as **regulated activities**.

Regulated activities

There are six regulated activities which require a worker to have an Enhanced DBS check with a barred list check. They are:

1. Providing personal care

Anyone who assists with activities such as drinking, eating, going to the toilet, etc.

Anyone who prompts and supervises with activities such as drinking, eating, going to the toilet, etc, as the adult cannot make the decision to do so themselves.

Anyone who trains, instructs or offers advice on the above because of an adult's age, illness or disability.

2. Assistance with cash, bills and/or shopping

Anyone who assists in managing an adult's cash, paying their bills or shopping on their behalf.

3. Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs

Anyone who provides assistance in the conduct of an adult's own affairs, for example, lasting or enduring powers of attorney.

4. Conveying

Anyone who transports an adult to, from or between places where they receive health, personal or social care (this does not include transporting people to and from church).

5. Providing healthcare

Any healthcare professional providing healthcare to an adult.

6. Providing social work

Anyone who provides social care.

Volunteers at Lunch Clubs or social activities provided for the elderly are not likely to meet the definition of regulated activity with adults at risk, unless they are providing physical assistance with eating, drinking or going to the toilet.

Please Note: Someone who does not fit the requirement for a DBS check will still need an understanding and awareness of working with adults at risk.

If a worker meets the old (pre-2012) definition of regulated activity, they are still eligible for an Enhanced DBS check, but without the barred list check.

For more information on eligibility and the Disclosure and Barring System, See the '*BUGB guide to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)*' (publication date: 1 November 2015).

Working with alleged or known offenders

If it becomes known that within your congregation there is an offender or someone against whom a serious allegation has been made, your local association should be contacted without delay. There are several processes which will need to be followed, but each one is dealt with on a case by case basis, and the Association Safeguarding Contact will have the expertise to help your church at each step.

The Processes

Your Association Safeguarding Contact will support and advise you through these processes and will have all the information you will need – please do not attempt to address this issue without contacting them.

- A small group of people is set up to work with the alleged or known offender. This should include the minister, and it may be an existing church safeguarding group. This group will liaise with the local association and statutory authorities where necessary.
- A risk assessment is carried out to determine the level of risk that the alleged or known offender poses.
- A formal agreement is written and then agreed by the alleged or known offender. This lays out the conditions under which they can attend church services and various other activities organised by the church.
- The formal agreement is reviewed at regular intervals (not less than annually and when circumstances change) by all parties.
- A press statement is prepared and written in advance, where appropriate.

It is important that no information about the alleged or known offender or the formal agreement is shared with anyone outside of the small group without the individual's knowledge, and that confidentiality is maintained.

Alleged or known offenders who are themselves adults at risk

A formal agreement may be quite a daunting process for someone with learning difficulties or a young person, yet having something in place is still necessary. Therefore an alternative may be to arrange a meeting with the individual in question. Here the minister can take the individual through the main elements of a formal agreement (for example, "Someone will sit with you when you are in church, to make sure that everything's okay") in a non-threatening and easy to understand way. It is important that someone present is taking notes throughout the meeting, preferably not the minister or whoever is leading the meeting.

The individual would need to verbally agree to the requirements laid out in the meeting. Rather than signing a formal 'agreement', the individual would instead sign to say that they agree with the minutes or meeting notes, and that they will stick to what has been agreed during the meeting. This will result in the same outcome as a contract, but is a more informal and appropriate approach. The agreed requirements will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure the individual is complying, exactly as a formal agreement would be.

Pastoral support for alleged or known offenders

Outside of the statutory authorities, the majority of offenders will have little or no support from their family or friends, and there will be no public sympathy for them because of the nature of what they have done. By offering much needed pastoral care and support, the church can play a significant role in the rehabilitation of the offender, and potentially help to minimise and even prevent further offending.

An important aspect of this care and support is the imposition of boundaries or a formal agreement (or equivalent). If the offender truly wants to participate in the life of the church, has an understanding of the extent and damage of their crimes, and is committed to a new life, then they will understand the necessity of the restrictions placed upon them.

Alleged offenders should also be able to access pastoral care and support and a formal agreement (or equivalent) needs to be put in place and reviewed once the outcome of the situation is known.

Pastoral support for families of alleged or known offenders

It is worth noting that the families of alleged or known offenders will also be affected by what has happened, and in particular how they are now perceived and treated by the wider community. The church has the opportunity to play a vital role in the care and support of families of alleged or known offenders. Please speak to your Association Safeguarding Contact for help and support with this.

Appendix 1 – Glossary

Abuse The violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It comes from the misuse of power and control that someone has over another.

Abuse of trust Abuse of trust is when someone abuses their position of authority or trust against another person, for their own personal gain or gratification. A minister or church worker is seen as holding a position of authority or trust.

Adults at Risk Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental capacity and understanding, age or illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation. This may be a short term or long term condition.

Adult Social Care Services (ASCS) Adult Social Care Services are part of your local authority's social services, and they are responsible for assessing for, arranging or providing social or community care for adults. Adult Social Care Services should be contacted if you have a concern about an adult at risk or if you simply need some advice.

Appointeeship Appointeeship is when the Department for Work and Pensions appoints someone to collect and spend benefits and pensions on behalf of someone who cannot manage their own affairs, because they are mentally incapable or severely disabled.

Care Act 2014 The Care Act 2014 aims to give safeguarding a legal framework for how local authorities and other agencies should protect adults at risk from abuse and neglect.

Carers A carer is a person who helps another individual with an impairment with their activities of daily living. They may be paid or unpaid.

Contract A contract is a formal agreement between the church and someone who poses a risk to others, outlining what they can and cannot do within the church setting. Contracts are usually, although not exclusively, put in place for known or alleged sex offenders.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) The Disclosure and Barring Service is a government agency which provides information about employees' and volunteers' criminal record history, so that employers are able to make safer recruitment decisions. They check if an individual has any criminal convictions, if they are barred from working with children or adults at risk and if the police hold any other relevant information about that person.

Good practice Good practice is advice and procedures which, when followed and put in place, results in the best way for a church to function whilst enabling all participants to remain safe from harm.

Grooming Grooming is when someone takes time to build an emotional connection with a vulnerable person, and potentially also their family and wider community (including the church), in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Grooming can be carried out remotely or in person.

Harm The result of mistreatment or abuse.

Human Rights Act 1998 This act gives further effect in UK law to the European Convention of Human Rights, which aims to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people.

Legal Deputy A legal deputy, authorised by the Court of Protection, is responsible for making decisions on behalf of someone who lacks mental capacity. There are 2 types of legal deputy; one with responsibility for property and financial affairs (eg. paying bills, organising a pension) and one with responsibility for personal welfare (eg. making decisions about medical treatment and how someone is looked after).

Mental Capacity Within safeguarding, mental capacity is whether or not someone has the capacity or ability to make decisions about themselves and their safety and well-being.

Mental Capacity Act 2005 The Mental Capacity Act 2005 protects and empowers people who lack the capacity to make decisions for themselves. It does this by providing a framework for making decisions on their behalf, whether the decisions are life-changing events or everyday matters.

No Secrets Published by the Department of Health in 2000, No Secrets provided a framework for the safeguarding of adults. This included the development and implementation of inter-agency policies and procedures to protect adults at risk, and the recommended structures for local authorities investigating abuse allegations. Although it is now superseded by the Care Act 2014 it still has some useful definitions and information.

Power of Attorney A Power of Attorney is a legal document whereby one person (the “donor”) gives another person (the “attorney”) the power to act on their behalf with regard to their property and financial affairs, and/or their health and welfare.

Risk Assessment Risk assessments within safeguarding examine and measure the levels of risk in allowing known or alleged offenders to take part in different aspects of church life. Please note that risk assessments regarding blemished DBS disclosures should only be carried out by the BU Safeguarding Team.

Safeguarding Safeguarding is the protection of adults and children from harm, abuse, fear or neglect.

Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Safeguarding Adults Boards are inter-agency groups with a range of representatives who may include members from different areas within the local statutory authority, carer, disability and advocacy groups as well as health care professionals. Their aim is to promote and develop effective protection systems for adults at risk in their locality.