St Benedict's Church, Glastonbury

This policy was agreed by the Parochial Church Council on 7th July 2026 and will be revised at least annually.

Our church is committed to follow the policies of the "Parish Safeguarding Handbook" of the Church of England (see link below) and the following derives from this document. We also agree to follow the Practice Guidance from the C of E House of Bishops on safeguarding and to adopt the Diocese of Bath and Wells Safeguarding Policies.

We will work with our Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith bodies, to promote the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We are committed to acting promptly whenever a safeguarding concern is raised, and we will work with the Diocesan Team and appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation is necessary.

If a child or vulnerable adult comes to notice as having suffered abuse in the past, our church officers will notify the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to ensure the matter is on record. Support will be offered to adult survivors of child abuse, who will also be encouraged to make a statement to the Police if they have not done so already.

Policy: Statement of Intent

Our church in all aspects of its life is committed to and will promote the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It fully accepts and endorses the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

St Ben's is working towards creating a safe, caring, and non-discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the particular situations that create vulnerability. Issues which need to be considered include both the physical environment and the attitudes of workers and volunteers. We want to foster a culture of informed vigilance towards the dangers of abuse, and an environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and find support.

At our Parish we recognise that the few who are determined to harm children or adults deliberately seek out groups or organisations where they can meet children or other vulnerable people. The Church is particularly vulnerable to such people. Creating and maintaining a safeguarding culture will discourage them from becoming involved for the wrong reasons and make it difficult for them to harm or abuse children or adults if they do.

We recognise that the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility, not just of parents or those who have formal leadership. The whole community needs to be aware of the dangers of abuse and report concerns and take action if necessary.

Definitions

We define "**abuse**" as a violation of another person's basic rights, resulting in serious harm. We recognise that abuse can take many forms: physical, sexual, psychological, financial, discriminatory and more. It can take place over the internet. It can take the form of neglect by others, or of self-neglect. We recognise that abuse can be domestic abuse, abuse in a person's own home. We know that abuse can take place in the church. Children and vulnerable adults can also abuse others. Abuse can take the form of volunteers harming other volunteers or clients, or clients causing harm to volunteers. Or it may come to the attention of our volunteers that people outside our organisation are abusing one of our clients. We recognise that the signs of abuse are complex and

we are committed to helping our staff and volunteers to recognise them by providing appropriate training. We will seek to challenge any abuse of power and authority within the church.

If any member of our church community is known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult we will offer the offender care and support, including supervision and referral to the appropriate authorities. We will support them if they wish to continue to attend church services whilst supervising their attendance to reduce the risk of further offending.

"**Neglect**" is defined as a failure to meet a person's basic needs.

We define "**safeguarding**" as working to protect a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect, promoting that person's wellbeing and freedom to make their own decisions.

A "**vulnerable adult**" is someone who by reason of age, mental or physical illness, disability or other situation, is unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself against significant harm or exploitation. This would include a temporary reduction in capacity brought about by life events. A vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse, including financial abuse, and neglect.

We define a "**child**" as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

"**Substantial contact**" is defined as contact which is more than the casual contact as say a shopkeeper might have with the public. We will assess if a role is classed as "regulated activity"

"**Regulated activity**" is assistance provided to an adult which if they need it, then they would be considered vulnerable (e.g. Providing personal care, counselling in a health care setting, social work, etc.). We will assess if a role involves regulated activity as set out in government guidance.

"**Child abuse**" is where a child is harmed by an adult or another child, as a one-off action or over a period of time. Abuse can be physical (e.g. hitting or shaking), sexual (e.g. penetration, involvement of children in the production of sexual images, or forcing children to watch sexual activity), emotional (e.g. bullying, telling the child they are inadequate, blaming, controlling, causing them to see the ill-treatment of others, or cyber-bullying), or abuse by neglect (e.g. failure to provide adequate food or warm, or medical treatment.)

The term "**complaint**" can cover an allegation, disclosure or statement. It need not be in writing but once received it must be recorded and acted upon. Complaints can be taken from alleged victims and also from third parties.

Our commitment

We believe that everyone, adult or child, has the right to be treated with respect and dignity, to have their privacy respected, to be able to lead as independent a life as possible, and to choose how to lead his or her life. We believe that everyone is entitled to the protection of the law, to be heard and to be able to use their chosen language or method of communication. We believe that everyone should have their rights upheld, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion, or cultural background.

In any situation where there may be a difference of opinion about priorities, the welfare of any child or vulnerable adult should be the paramount concern.

Safeguarding Practice

This is how we put the above policies and principles into practice.

We appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer

We appoint an appropriately experienced and trained Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and PCC. This PSO is always a lay person. The PSO is supported, trained and has a copy of our parish safeguarding policies and practice. The PSO is the safeguarding lead for our soup lunch and other activities. In the event of an incident or a concern that anyone at St Ben's is being abused or is at risk of abuse, volunteers and clients should contact Helen, or if she is not available, the incumbent. If the person is in immediate danger, phone 999.

We ensure safe Recruitment, Support and Training

Staff and volunteers working with children, young people, or adults who may be vulnerable are recruited following safer recruitment practice. Applicants are asked to fill out an application form (see appendix below for an example) which gives a clear description of the responsibilities involved, and we take up and check two references, with applicants undergoing a short interview.

If appropriate we use criminal records checks. If they reach the criteria set out on the Government website volunteers and staff will be required to apply for DBS checks at an appropriate level.

Our staff and volunteers take an appropriate level of safeguarding training at least every three years (Levels 1 and 2, Basic Awareness and Foundation Level, which includes training in recognising the different forms of abuse and signs of abuse. Where appropriate (e.g. clergy, readers, our Safeguarding Lead and our Supervisor for our Soup Lunch) individuals have undertaken the C of E's Safeguarding in Leadership training. The Parochial Church Council are our charity trustees, and all members of the PCC undertake safeguarding training to at least Basic Awareness level.

We ensure that all our staff and volunteers at St Ben's are aware of and work to our safeguarding policies and practice. The Parish Safeguarding Handbook and this document are available in church. We will also provide volunteers with further literature on safeguarding.

No volunteering at our Soup Lunch involves "regulated activity" with children or adults who may be vulnerable, and therefore our volunteers do not require a DBS and are not required to provide a Confidential Declaration Form. Contact between volunteers and clients is limited to serving and clearing food and simple welcoming, and always take place in a public environment. Our volunteers do not therefore have substantial contact with those who might be vulnerable. Nevertheless our Soup Lunch supervisor holds an Enhanced DBS.

We ensure that activity risk assessments are completed for activities in the church. For the Soup Lunch this includes appropriate Food Hygiene training: level one for everyone, level two for those preparing food and level 3 for our supervisor. This training is renewed every three years.

Arrangements for after-service refreshments are usually organised by PCC members, with other occasional volunteers. This is not a "regulated activity" and takes place in a public area without substantial contact with others. We do not require servers to complete safeguarding training. When refreshments are served at fund-raising events or concerts arranged by the church, where the chief organiser is not already a PCC member they will be required to complete at least basic safeguarding training. As above, we do consider other serving or assisting at a fundraising event to require safeguarding training.

We provide appropriate insurance to cover for all activities in the name of our PCC.

We display appropriate information

On our noticeboard we display the following information:

- This document, with a formal statement of adoption by the PCC.
- Contact details of the PSO, Churchwardens, and Incumbent.
- Contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
- Information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, both on our noticeboard and inside toilet doors.
- Information about key helplines, e.g. Childline.
- In the church we provide access to a hard copy of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook.
- On the front page of our parish website we provide information about how to contact our Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and our Parish Safeguarding Officer, as well as links to our safeguarding policies and practices.

We respond appropriately

The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer(DSO) is consulted whenever any safeguarding concern arises in the Parish.

The procedure we follow in case of a concern about abuse:

If there is immediate danger, we would dial 999.

In a non-urgent situation, we contact the PSO or the incumbent. They must then report any safeguarding concern to the DSO within 24 hours. If neither the PSO or incumbent are available we would contact the DSO directly. If none of the above are available within 24 hours we would contact Children's Social Care or Adult Social Care, or the Police, directly.

We protect the data of individuals

We comply with all data protection legislation especially in regard to storing information about the 'church workforce' including volunteers, and any safeguarding records.

During an interregnum, the PCC working with the churchwardens, ensures that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing it on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent gives the safeguarding info he or she has to the PSO who then passes it on the new incumbent.

We review and report on progress

The PSO regularly reports on safeguarding in the parish, and safeguarding is a standing agenda item at each of our PCC meetings. At the Annual church meeting the PCC provides an annual safeguarding report to the parish.

We have regard to safeguarding when we organise church activities and when we hire out our premises

We ensure that an activity risk assessment is completed for each activity associate with children or vulnerable adults, run in the name of our church. Through our staff and volunteers we are responsible for safeguarding in and on church property and in other premises being used for activities organised by our church. This responsibility extends to travel organised by the church but not to private travel arrangements.

St Ben's is available for use by the wider community, and our hiring agreements include a requirement that the person or body hiring the premises agrees to comply with our safeguarding policy and with the guidance issues by the House of Bishops and the Diocese. Where activities involve children or vulnerable adults those running the activities are required to have had appropriate DBS checks. Those hiring our building should carry full public liability insurance if their activities are not covered by our own church insurance.

Support and Compliance

The measures identified should be checked during parish visitations. If you have questions or need support to comply with the above, contact the DSA for advice.

Contact Details

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Helen Roper
Tel: 07436 856451.
Email: safeguarding@stbens-glastonbury.uk

Diocesan Safeguarding Manager: Ben Goodhind
Tel: 01749 588917.
Email: ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org

Incumbent: Revd Alice Watson
Tel: 07816 920576.
Email: revalicewatson@gmail.com

The PCC of St Ben's Glastonbury voted to accept the policies of the C of E Parish Safeguarding Handbook, the Diocese of Bath and Wells Parish Safeguarding Policy and the above Parish Safeguarding Document, on 7th July 2026.

Signed on behalf of the PCC



Chair

Annex A: Safeguarding Procedure

Procedures for responding to a person disclosing abuse

Whenever a child, young person and/or adult reports that they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, or have caused or are causing harm to others, the initial response should be limited to listening carefully to the child, young person and/or adult. If someone makes a disclosure this might be the only time they will tell someone about what is happening.

Respond

Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity nominated safeguarding officer and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information, although it is acceptable to provide assurance that the information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do any type of examination e.g. checking for bruising.

Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate.
- Make a written record of the information in details as soon as possible (where possible in the child/adult's own words), including the time, date and place of incident/s, persons present and what was said
- Sign and date the written record
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Report

If there is immediate danger to a child/adult, contact the police. Ring 999.

- Otherwise avoid delay and take action: talk immediately, within 24 hours, to the nominated safeguarding officer and share any concerns.
- Within 24 hours, the nominated safeguarding officer reports the concerns to the DSA.
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to child/adult social care and/or the police. This must be done within 24 hours.

If in any doubt seek advice from child/adult social care and/or the police.

Responding to Concerns and Allegations Procedure

