

Promoting a Safe Church

1 November 2006

The Church of England has published a policy and guidelines for safeguarding vulnerable adults in line with the policies and procedures developed over the last ten years for the safeguarding of children.

Promoting a Safe Church builds on the 'companion volume' *Protecting all God's Children* (2004) and has been prepared in response to Department of Health guidance in *No Secrets* (2000) and *Safeguarding Adults*, published by the Association of Directors of Social Services in 2005.

The document includes a policy for the Church of England on safeguarding vulnerable adults, examples of good practice and procedures to follow. It says the Church should have a particular care for 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.

There are many circumstances that may render someone vulnerable. This policy and guidance booklet seeks to address proper pastoral conduct and guidance for those with pastoral responsibilities within the church and also what church officers and members should do when a person discloses abuse taking place outside the church, or within their family or care home.

The policy is summarised as:

We are committed to respectful pastoral ministry to all adults within our church community.

We are committed, within our church community, to the safeguarding and protection of vulnerable people.

We will carefully select and train all those with any pastoral responsibility within the Church, including the use of Criminal Records Bureau disclosures where legal or appropriate.

We will respond without delay to any complaint made that an adult for whom we were responsible has been harmed, cooperating with police and the local authority in any investigation.

We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate healing ministry.

We will challenge any abuse of power by anyone in a position of trust.

We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a vulnerable person.

In endorsing *Promoting a Safe Church*, the House of Bishops seeks to encourage safe pastoral care for all adults, raise awareness of the needs of vulnerable adults and promote good practice for those in positions of trust.

Promoting a Safe Church, priced £5.99, is published by Church House Publishing and is available from Christian bookshops including Church House Bookshop, 31 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BN, tel. 020-7898 1300, e-mail bookshop@c-of-e.org.uk, on the web at: www.chbookshop.co.uk (mail order available). It is also available on the [web](#) .

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