



# Morpeth Parish

St James the Great + St Mary the Virgin + St Aidan

## Morpeth Parish supports wholeheartedly TOWARDS A SAFER CHURCH **MORPETH PARISH SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT 2023/24**

*This statement was adopted by the Parish of Morpeth at a Parochial Church Council meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_ and is reviewed annually.*

### **As members of this Parish we commit ourselves to care for one another’s safely.**

We recognize that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as at risk at some time in our lives.

We commit ourselves to:

- the Safeguarding of people who may be at risk, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church following diocesan guidelines set out in full at:  
[www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding)  
[www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding/safeguardingtemplatesresources](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding/safeguardingtemplatesresources)  
see also attached extract from the CofE Parish Handbook pages 18-24
- promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be at risk.
- recruit safely following the recognised procedures
- supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work with children/young people and adults who might be at risk.

It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse. We will report any abuse that we discover or suspect.

We agree to work within the guidelines of the Church of England and the Diocese.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by The Safeguarding policy and the guidelines established by this Parish.

This Parish appoints 6 Officers as part of a Responsible Caring Group:

Ms Debbie Bass-Pickin – Parish Safeguarding Officer - Lead

Mrs. Pauline Young –DBS Administrator

Mr. Nick Stratford Domestic Abuse Champion

Mrs. Vivienne Sommerville – Domestic Abuse Champion<sup>1</sup>

This statement is reviewed each year by the Parochial Church Council.

Rector .....

Churchwardens ..... ..

..... Date:



## SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2023

### Section 1

Details of the place of worship: Morpeth Parish

Name of Place of Worship: St James the Great + St Mary the Virgin + St Aidan's

Address: Parish Office, St Aidan's Church, Shields Road, Morpeth NE61 2SA

Tel No: 01670 503326

General Email address: office.morpethparish@gmail.com

Rector :Rev. Simon White

Rector Telephone / Email: 07749866402/rev.simonjhwhite@gmail.com

Safeguarding Coordinator Name: Debbie Bass-Pickin

Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Telephone / Email: 07983936626/basspickin13@gmail.com

Diocese: Newcastle

Diocese Safeguarding Officer: Carol Butler

Diocese Safeguarding Officer Contact Telephone/Email: 07825 167 016  
/c.butler@newcastle.anglican.org

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

Morpeth parish consists of 3 churches, St James the Great, St Mary the Virgin and St Aidan. We run a number of services and prayer groups and social events through out the year, including Feast, Home Groups and Teatime Church (a family service). We aim to restart youth activities, including Youth Alpha over the coming months. We have a toddler group "Playtime Plus" which is independently run by parents and carers at St Aidan's.

## **Section 2: Introduction**

Good governance helps an organisation prevent abuse and means it can respond quickly and with integrity when concerns arise. Central to this, is the PCC.

The PCC is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility for the parish and have a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the organisation or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a parish goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. It is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a parish achieves its stated object” (ICSA The Governance Institute, 2017)

### **Positions of Trust**

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022 it is illegal (England and Wales)(Northern Ireland) for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our organisation but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example,
- are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures
- with codes of conduct
- the values of the organisation are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people.
- and there is open communication.

## **Our commitment**

As a PCC we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

### **As members of this Parish we commit ourselves to care for one another's safely.**

We recognize that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as at risk at some time in our lives.

We commit ourselves to:

- the Safeguarding of people who may be at risk, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church following diocesan guidelines set out in full at:  
[www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding)  
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see also attached extract from the CofE Parish Handbook pages 18-24
- promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be at risk.
- recruit safely following the recognised procedures
- supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake
- work with children/young people and adults who might be at risk.

It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse. We will report any abuse that we discover or suspect.

We agree to work within the guidelines of the Church of England and the Diocese.

## **Section 3**

### **Prevention**

#### **Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

*1. We shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child or vulnerable adult from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, financial and Spiritual abuse.*

*2. Such protective measures should include effective procedures for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child or vulnerable adult maltreatment.*

## **Safer recruitment**

The PCC will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with guidance on safer recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A self-declaration form and disclosure and barring check (DBS) has been completed where necessary.
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy, Code of conduct and agreement (signed by both parties) and knows how to report concerns.

## **Safeguarding training**

The PCC is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The PCC will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

## **Practice Guidelines**

As an place of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

We have specific risk assessments and guidance for every activity we are involved in, a Code of Conduct for all volunteers and workers.

For some activities you will need specific forms, e.g., consent forms, risk assessments etc. These can be found in each activities pack. Please see Activity Leader for copies.

As a PCC we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults, and will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their job role and out. They will also receive further training as necessary.

#### **Section 4:**

##### **Hiring of Church Buildings/Partnership Working**

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

We therefore have clear guidelines and expectations of those who use our church buildings, including the safeguarding policy, which is part of our hire agreement.

#### **Section 5**

##### **Responding to allegations of abuse**

###### **If you are worried that**

A child or vulnerable adult in church might be suffering some kind of ABUSE

- **DO NOT** – try to diagnose, investigate or sort it out yourself
- **THINK HARD** – about what it is about the child's appearance or behaviour that is making you worried or suspicious
- **DO NOT** – promise confidentiality if someone talks to you about what might be abuse
- **DECIDE** – who you should TALK to and TALK TO THEM – within 24 hours.

It is essential that we all follow the **3 R's** – **Respond** to the disclosure/suspicion or allegations, **Record** the relevant information and **Report** – following the disclosure procedures. **Please see appendix for the flowchart for reporting.**

The Parish Safeguarding Officer, Debbie Bass-Pickin (07983936626

This could be the Rector, Rev. Simon White (01670 517716),

or any of the people listed below:

If the child or vulnerable adult is in the care of the church and you have any concerns you can contact Carol Butler, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (07825167016)

email [c.butler@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:c.butler@newcastle.anglican.org)

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

- Documenting a concern

The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

**Name: Debbie Bass-Pickin** (hereafter the "Parish Safeguarding Officer")

**Tel:** 07983936626

**Email:** basspickin13@gmail.com

The above is nominated by the PCC to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- In the absence of the Parish Safeguarding Officer or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Parish Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made to:

Diocesan Safeguarding team: Carol Butler: 07825 167 016 /c.butler@newcastle.anglican.org

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

- The Parish Safeguarding Officer should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

### **Children's Services & Vulnerable Adults Services**

**Northumberland Initial Response One Call 01670 536400**  
(24 hours)

#### **Police 111 or 999**

- The Parish Safeguarding Officer may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern.
- Chair of PCC responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Officer, the absence of the Parish Safeguarding Officer should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.
- The PCC will support the Parish Safeguarding Officer in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, although the PCC hope that members of the place of worship will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Parish Safeguarding Officer has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Parish Safeguarding Officer(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the PCC demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

#### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:**

##### **Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.**

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Parish Safeguarding Officer will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.

- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

### **Allegations of sexual abuse**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Parish Safeguarding Officer will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police.

**Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult needs protection: Suspicions or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.**

If there is concern about any of the above, Parish Safeguarding Officer will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Parish Safeguarding Officer will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e., counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

## **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Parish Safeguarding Officer, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services regarding the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

## **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs**

The Parish Safeguarding Officer will:

- Liaise with Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor and/or Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church.

## **Section 6**

### **Pastoral Care**

#### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The PCC is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship.

## **Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk**

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties and a worship agreement will be put in place.

## **Adoption of the policy**

This statement and policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually on:

Signed by:

Position:

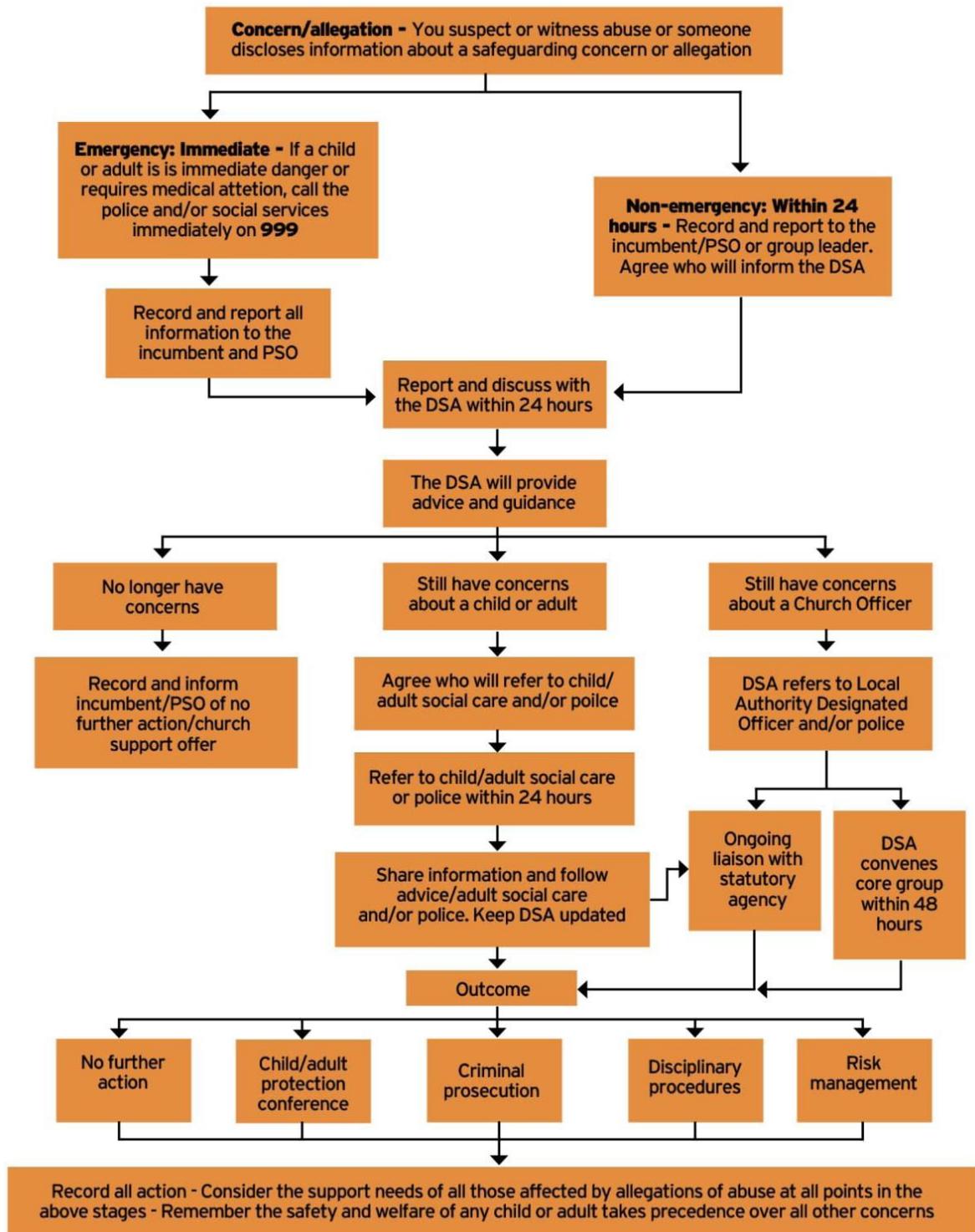
Signed by:

Position

Date:

A copy of this policy can be found on our website: <http://parishofmorpeth.org.uk/> or in each church building.

Appendix 1

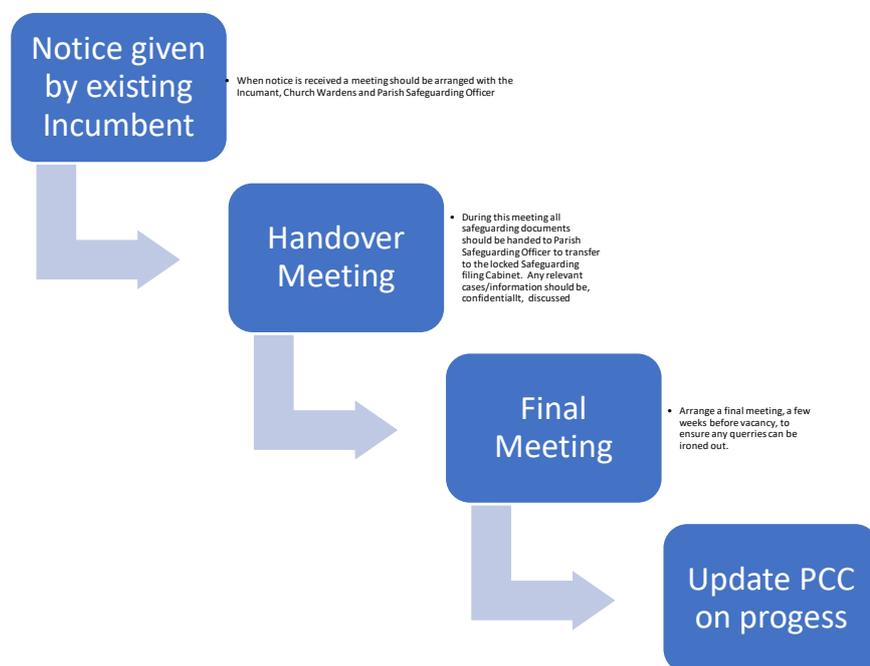


## Appendix 2

### Action Plan in the event of Interregnum

The PCC is responsible for the financial affairs of the church, for the maintenance and insurance of the church building, for health and safety in church and churchyard, and for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. It is the duty of the minister and PCC to consult together on matters of general concern and importance to the parish.

During an interregnum the PCC must, working with the churchwardens and Parish Safeguarding Officer, ensure that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing the information on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent must give the safeguarding information to the parish safeguarding officer who can pass the information on to the new incumbent when he/she takes up his new role.



All safeguarding concerns will be handled, as stated in our safeguarding policy, by the Parish Safeguarding Officer, who will take the lead in these and discuss with the Churchwardens as appropriate. The PSO will liaise regularly with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for support and advice as needed. Reports will be made, as usual at each PCC meeting and all policies and procedures will be reviewed and adopted as per the parish's schedule.