

VULNERABLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding means enabling people to live their lives free from harm, abuse and neglect, and to have their health, wellbeing and human rights protected.

This **Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook** is intended to protect vulnerable adults attending Parklands Church. It contains the church's Policy and Procedures relating to the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable adults, and constitutes a handbook for those working with vulnerable adults at Parklands Church.

It also explains how anyone with concerns about a vulnerable adult may report their concerns, thereby aiming to ensure appropriate care and support for everyone attending the Parklands Church community.

The church has a trained Safeguarding Team, who deal confidentially with concerns about children and vulnerable adults within the church family. Members of the public with safeguarding concerns of any type relating to a vulnerable adult are encouraged to contact one of the Safeguarding Team Leads. See Section 10 on page 19 of this document for information on how to report a concern.

Information about the church's Safeguarding Team, including contact details and the procedure for team workers and members of the public to pass on concerns, is also available on the Safeguarding Noticeboard in the church building. This is located in the main foyer.

Employees of the church wishing to report concerns may wish to check whether their concerns fall under the scope of the church's separate *Whistleblowing Policy*, a copy of which they will have been given during induction. A paper copy of the *Whistleblowing Policy* is also available for reference in the church office.

The Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis, and in the event of a change in legislation will be updated between scheduled reviews. The date of issue of each edition is shown in the footer to the document.

All those who work with vulnerable adults in Parklands Church will be given a copy of this Handbook, and will be required to read it to familiarise themselves with its provisions.

To confirm that they have received and read the Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook and agreed to abide by its terms, workers will be required to sign and date the Declaration on page 26. Their signature will be countersigned by a member of the Safeguarding Team, who will securely file a separate copy of each worker's Declaration page to ensure all staff and volunteers have received and read the Handbook and have agreed to abide by its terms.

VULNERABLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Definitions and Key Principles

1.1 Definition of a vulnerable adult

An adult at risk is a person over the age of 18 who has needs for care and support or who may have such needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), and who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and who, as a result of those needs, is unable to protect him- or her-self against abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines an 'adult at risk' as 'someone who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who may be unable to take care of themselves or to protect themselves against harm or exploitation'. Exploitation concerns the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons.

For the purposes of our church community, we choose to use the term 'vulnerable adult' rather than 'adult at risk', whilst defining the term in exactly the same way as in the 2014 statutory regulations.

A vulnerable adult could be a person with learning disabilities and/or mental health problems. They can also be older people and those with a disability, particularly when their situation is compounded by additional factors such as physical frailty, chronic illness, bereavement, sensory impairment, social problems, emotional difficulties, poverty, homelessness or substance abuse.

It should be noted that:

- vulnerability or vulnerable circumstances are not necessarily permanent states
- vulnerability is not always visible
- a person with apparently visible vulnerabilities may not perceive them as such
- we are all vulnerable at different stages of life
- vulnerable people may also pose risk and cause harm

1.2 Key Principles of protecting vulnerable adults

- The welfare of the adult is paramount.
- All vulnerable adults have the right to be protected and safeguarded from abuse.
- The safeguarding of vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns and implement the procedures and principles laid out in this handbook.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and/or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.
- Every day matters. It is better to help vulnerable adults as early as possible before issues escalate.
- Vulnerable adults and families are best protected and supported when there is a coordinated response from all relevant agencies. This requires cooperation and sharing of information.
- A paper copy of Parklands Church's Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook is available in the church office for reference by leaders, safeguarding coordinators, workers, parents, carers and members of the congregation.

2. Safeguarding at Parklands Church

2.1 Definition of Safeguarding

The term “safeguarding” means a range of activities aimed at upholding an individual’s fundamental right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding seeks to enable people to live their lives free from harm, abuse and neglect, and to have their health, wellbeing and human rights protected. To support this policy and procedures handbook, Parklands Church makes safeguarding information available to its members through its website (where Concern Forms can also be accessed), the safeguarding Noticeboard in the foyer, on posters displayed throughout its premises and from members of the Safeguarding Team (see section 15).

2.2 Safeguarding in the context of Parklands Church

Parklands Church runs ministries to both children and adults, including vulnerable adults, who are integrated into the events of the church as much as possible. Vulnerable adults are supported in particular by specific church initiatives, which include :

- a weekly gathering at Hazel Court, which provides support for the bereaved, the lonely, and those enjoying the assisted living opportunities offered by Hazel Court
- a Pastoral Team which meets regularly and which aims to provide confidential support for those who have either temporary or longer-term difficulties within the church community
- in-person community and online Circle Groups, which aim to support all adults in the context of smaller gatherings. These meet in member’s homes and elsewhere, and provide an opportunity for prayer and emotional support
- pastoral visits by the leadership and Pastoral Team which provide support for vulnerable adults, carried out within appropriate boundaries (see section 4.2)
- the linking-up and referring of vulnerable adults to others in the community who may be able to offer additional support
- counselling opportunities, where possible and appropriate

It is the intention of Parklands Church to offer support, encouragement and spiritual teaching to anyone who wishes to receive it. This means that the church will come into contact with adults from many different backgrounds, and encounter a variety of different social patterns. As a church we take this responsibility very seriously, and through training and this Handbook, we endeavour to protect and safeguard the welfare of any vulnerable adults with whom we come into contact.

As a church we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, verbal, sexual and emotional abuse as well as hate crime and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to *“all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”*.

The Leadership Team of Parklands Church has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook in accordance with statutory guidance. The church is committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

As part of its ministry, Parklands Church is committed to :

- the care and nurture of all vulnerable adults, in a respectful pastoral ministry where they are listened to, related to effectively, and valued for who they are
- encouraging and supporting the families and carers of vulnerable adults
- establishing safe and caring communities, which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance regarding the dangers of abuse
- implementing clear procedures for dealing with concerns of possible abuse, and maintaining good links with the relevant authorities
- providing ongoing safeguarding training for all its workers, and regularly reviewing its operational guidelines
- ensuring that all premises in which the church’s work is undertaken meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and are welcoming and inclusive

3. Staff and volunteer responsibility and recruitment

3.1 Requirements by law

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect as laid out in Part 7 “Safeguarding” of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, to enable them to identify vulnerable adults who may be in need of protection. The full document may be viewed at :

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/pdfs/anaw_20140004_en.pdf

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the referral process in the event of concerns about the welfare of a vulnerable adult.

3.2 Responsibilities and awareness

As far as possible, Parklands Church will seek to integrate vulnerable adults into the life of the church as a whole.

It may be necessary to provide additional support to ensure vulnerable adults are not at risk of being harmed or in a position to overly burden any member of the congregation or ministry team. As far as possible, vulnerable adults should not be placed in situations where they either could be harmed or could pose risk of causing harm to others.

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers involved in the provision of church services to be aware of and alert to any signs of potential abuse. Not all concerns relate to abuse, and there may well be other explanations. It is important therefore, whilst being vigilant, for everyone to keep an open mind.

3.3 Recruitment of staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with current legislation on safe recruitment. All adults working with vulnerable adults will be checked under the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) procedures. This covers everyone who works with vulnerable adults, whether they are staff, volunteers, family members or carers.

The safe recruitment process is as follows:

1. There is a clear written job description or person specification for the post.
2. The applicant completes a volunteer application form, and is interviewed if necessary.
3. The applicant is made aware of and given a copy of the church’s Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook. They must sign the Declaration to confirm that they have read it and agree to abide by its terms.
4. Applicants’ references are checked, and the current DBS process is completed. Qualifications where relevant are verified.
5. Volunteers must attend Safeguarding Training before undertaking their role.

4. Safe Working Practice for staff

4.1 Code of Conduct - general guidelines

Workers need to follow the following Codes of Conduct to minimise the risk to vulnerable adults and/or of being accused of inappropriate behaviour towards a vulnerable adult.

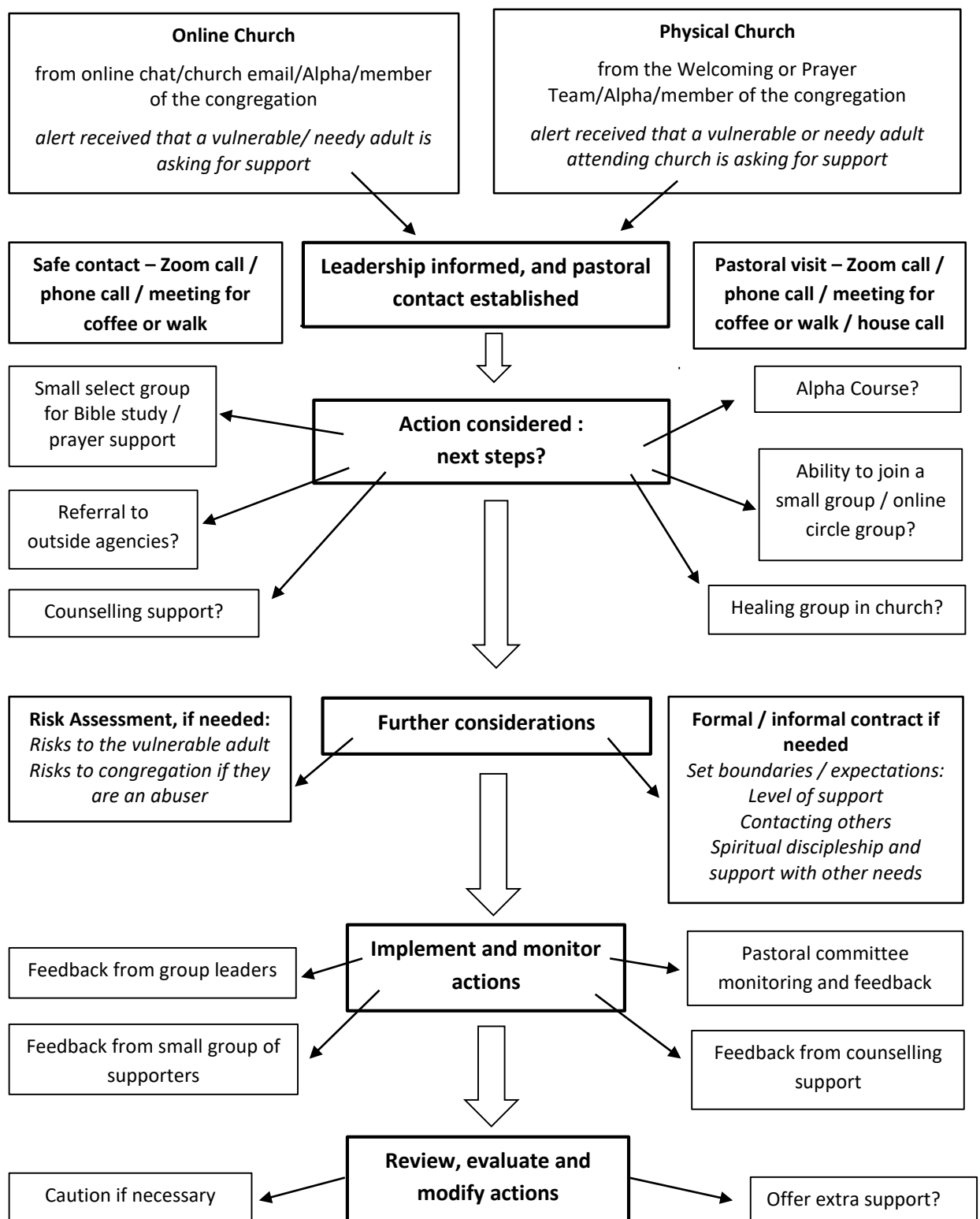
Workers are expected to :

- conduct themselves at all times in line with the church's Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- take care to observe appropriate boundaries when working with vulnerable adults. All leaders and workers should seek advice immediately if they come across a vulnerable adult who may have been harmed, or a colleague or volunteer whose conduct appears inappropriate
- always respect the vulnerable adult. Workers should always ask about personal preferences, forms of address, how much help might be needed, and whether or not a hug is appropriate. Sometimes it may be necessary to set boundaries for some to ensure the safety of others
- make no assumptions that someone's level of comprehension matches their verbal communication
- avoid creating dangerous dependencies. If a vulnerable adult is becoming too attached to them, workers should report their concerns discreetly to their Team Leader. Any serious concerns or conversations should be noted in writing
- set a good example: workers should challenge inappropriate behaviour, but to do so courteously. They should be aware of their own power, even if they don't feel powerful
- maintain an *"it could happen here"* attitude
- be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse, and to promptly report any concerns they may have about the welfare of a vulnerable adult to the Safeguarding Team (see Section 10)
- under no circumstances carry out their own investigation into any suspicions of abuse

4.2 Visiting a vulnerable adult in a home setting

- Most home visits are straightforward, as the vulnerable adult will be well-known to the church. If there are any concerns or risk factors, workers should take another adult along with them. If necessary, it may be preferable to meet the vulnerable adult outside the home. Workers are expected to think before they act, and to listen to their instincts.
- Workers should never offer "over the counter" medicines to any vulnerable adults they visit. Workers must not administer prescribed medicines to the vulnerable adult, even if asked to do so.
- Workers should not offer any advice if they are not qualified to do so. It is acceptable to say that they don't know, and to seek further information to answer a query. If a worker feels out of their depth, they should seek advice and refer the vulnerable adult to others.
- Workers should be clear about boundaries. They should keep to agreed limits on how much time is to be spent with someone, and how often they will visit. Workers should be careful not to assume extra responsibilities on a gradual basis. They should be realistic about the amount of time they have, and not to feel obliged to say 'yes' to every request for help.
- Workers should set a pattern and manage expectations about communications between visits, avoiding over-frequent texting/emailing and exchanges late at night. They should set boundaries and stick to them.
- Workers should avoid handling money on behalf of vulnerable adults wherever possible. If it is unavoidable, they must provide receipts and cover their actions, ideally having another person present to serve as a witness.
- Workers should not accept any gifts from vulnerable adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family.
- For detailed information regarding Parklands Church's policy on communicating via digital platforms and social media with regard to vulnerable adults, please refer to the church's separate digital media policies which are available on the church website in the *Hub*.

4.3 Flow chart of routes to integration for a vulnerable adult



5. Definitions and general indications of abuse

5.1 Definition of abuse

Defining the abuse of vulnerable adults is a difficult and complex issue. Abuse may occur by the inflicting of harm, by failing to prevent harm, or failing to provide care. A vulnerable adult may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known to, or in a trusted relationship with the vulnerable adult.

There are a number of steps that can be taken to help prevent abuse. The formulation of effective policies, clear guidelines and good practice in training and recruitment of staff and volunteers all contribute. However, they are only effective if members of the team actively engage in applying the policies and procedures, and encourage each other to maintain good practice. Everyone is part of the answer in preventing abuse.

5.2 What is abuse?

Abuse means being treated badly. It can be the result of an action or the failure to act in an appropriate manner. It includes physical abuse, financial or material abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, verbal and hate crimes, and neglect. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts.

5.3 Who might abuse a vulnerable adult?

Abuse can occur in any relationship – personal, professional or institutional. An abuser might be a family member, friend or neighbour. It could be someone who is paid to deliver care or other professional services, such as a health worker or someone working as a volunteer. There are also people who befriend and groom vulnerable adults and gain their trust in order to exploit or abuse them.

In an institutional setting, such as a care home or day service, the abuse could be by someone working there or someone else living in or using the service.

Some of the following may be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- *unexplained injury*
- *signs of fear or distress*
- *becoming withdrawn*
- *signs of neglect*
- *personal belongings going missing*
- *unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills*

There are several categories of abuse and neglect. Each has its own specific warning indicators, to which you should be alert.

6. Recognising the main forms of abuse

6.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a vulnerable adult. It may also involve misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint and other inappropriate physical interventions.

Physical harm may also be caused when a partner, parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a vulnerable adult. This situation is commonly described using terms such as *Factitious Illness by Proxy* or *Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy*. Physical abuse can also happen outside of the home. Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- *frequent injuries*
- *unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones*
- *unexplained bruises or cuts, burns, scalds or bite marks*

Changes of behaviour in vulnerable adults may include:

- *a fear of their parents, partner or carer being approached for an explanation*
- *aggressive behaviour, or severe temper outbursts*
- *flinching when approached or touched*
- *a reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather*
- *depression or withdrawn behaviour*

6.2 Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse is an attempt to control the behaviour, thoughts, and feelings of another human being through language. Controlling behaviours are designed to manipulate people into doing what the abuser wants them to do under the guise of love or respect or abject fear.

Verbal abuse involves using language to seek to pressure its victim into doubting themselves. It can involve blatantly offensive language designed to humiliate and gain power over another person. Verbal abuse also includes silence, the behaviour behind "the silent treatment", which purposefully ignores the needs or communication of another person and quietly says "*you're not important enough to acknowledge*". It can also include discriminatory language.

6.3 Emotional and psychological abuse

Emotional and psychological abuse includes the persistent emotional maltreatment of a vulnerable adult so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development and/or wellbeing. It may involve conveying to a vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Emotional or psychological abuse may include denying the vulnerable adult opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may include interactions that are beyond a vulnerable adult's mental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the vulnerable adult from participating in normal social interaction.

Emotional and psychological abuse may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing the vulnerable adult frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a vulnerable adult.

Some level of emotional or psychological abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of verbal and emotional abuse:

- *a vulnerable adult who is excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong*
- *parents, partners or carers who withdraw their attention from the vulnerable adult, giving them the 'cold shoulder'*
- *parents, partners or carers blaming their problems on the vulnerable adult*
- *parents, partners or carers who humiliate the vulnerable adult, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons*

Changes of behaviour may include:

- *neurotic behaviour*
- *fear of making mistakes*
- *excessive privacy*
- *self-harm*
- *fear of their partner, parent or carer being approached regarding their behaviour*

6.4 Hate Crime

The police and the Crown Prosecution Service have agreed the following definition for identifying and flagging hate crimes (see <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/hate-crime>):

Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a person's disability or perceived disability; race or perceived race; or religion or perceived religion; or sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation or transgender identity or perceived transgender identity.

The law recognises five types of hate crime, which are perpetrated on the basis of :

- race
- religion
- disability
- sexual orientation
- transgender identity

Any crime can be prosecuted as a hate crime if the offender has either:

- demonstrated hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity
- been motivated by hostility based on race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or a person's transgender identity.

An individual can be a victim of more than one type of hate crime.

6.5 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging the vulnerable adult to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a vulnerable adult in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse.

Changes of behaviour may include:

- *sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn*
- *fear of being left with a specific person or group of people*
- *having nightmares*
- *running away from home*
- *sexual knowledge which is beyond their developmental level, such as sexual drawings or language*
- *eating problems such as overeating or anorexia*
- *self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts*
- *saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about*

6.6 Financial and material abuse

This involves any theft or misuse of a person's money, property, or resources by a person in a position of trust in relation to a vulnerable adult. Types of financial or material abuse might include:

- *theft of money or possessions*
- *fraud or scamming*
- *preventing a vulnerable adult from accessing their own money, benefits or assets*
- *employees taking a loan from a vulnerable adult using their services*
- *undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the vulnerable adult in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions*
- *arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise an inheritance*
- *denying assistance to manage and/or monitor financial affairs*
- *denying assistance to access benefits*
- *misuse of personal allowance in a care home*
- *attempting to coerce the vulnerable adult into a romantic liaison to gain control over their assets*
- *misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home*
- *someone moving into a vulnerable adult's home and living rent-free without agreement, or under duress*
- *false representation, e.g. using a vulnerable person's bank account, cards or documents*
- *exploitation of a vulnerable adult's money or assets, e.g. the unauthorised use of a car*
- *misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority*
- *rogue trading – e.g. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs, the failure to carry out agreed repairs and poor workmanship*

Possible indicators of financial or material abuse in vulnerable adults may include :

- *missing personal possessions*
- *an unexplained lack of money, or an inability to maintain their normal lifestyle*
- *an unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts*
- *a Power of Attorney or Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) being obtained after the vulnerable adult has ceased to have the requisite mental capacity*
- *failure to register an LPA after the vulnerable adult has ceased to have mental capacity to manage their finances, so that it appears that they are continuing to do so*
- *evasiveness or a lack of co-operation from the person allocated to manage the vulnerable adult's financial affairs*
- *the family or others showing an unusual interest in the assets of the vulnerable person*
- *signs of financial hardship in cases where the vulnerable person's financial affairs are being managed by a Court Appointed Deputy, Attorney or LPA*
- *recent changes in deeds or title to property*
- *rent arrears and eviction notices*
- *a lack of clear financial accounts held by a care home or service*
- *a failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the vulnerable person*
- *a disparity between the vulnerable person's living conditions and their financial resources, such as insufficient food in the house*
- *unnecessary property repairs*

Changes of behaviour in a vulnerable adult may include:

- *paying bills after the payment due date*
- *missing credit card or loan payments altogether*
- *relying on overtime to cover debt-related expenses*
- *borrowing from family members to make monthly debt payments*
- *skipping one credit card bill to pay another*

6.7 Neglect and acts of omission

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet, or unresponsiveness to, a vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological and emotional needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the vulnerable adult's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent, partner or carer failing to :

- *provide adequate nutrition, clothing, prescribed medication, heating or shelter (including exclusion from home, or abandonment)*
- *protect a vulnerable adult from physical and emotional harm or danger*
- *ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)*
- *ensure access to appropriate medical care, services or treatment*

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect of vulnerable adults :

- *living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe*
- *appearing hungry or dirty*
- *being left without adequate clothing, for instance not having a winter coat*
- *living in dangerous conditions, for instance around drugs, alcohol or violence*
- *often appearing to be angry, aggressive or self-harming*
- *failing to receive basic health care*
- *parents, carers or partners failing to seek medical treatment when the vulnerable adult is ill or injured*
- *self-harm*

Changes of behaviour in vulnerable adults may include:

- *complaining of being tired all the time*
- *not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments*
- *having few friends*
- *mentioning being left alone or unsupervised*

7. Other forms of abuse

7.1 Organised abuse

Organised abuse occurs where there is more than a single abuser, and those concerned appear to act in collaboration to abuse a vulnerable adult. It also includes instances where someone uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit vulnerable adults for sexual abuse.

7.2 Spiritual abuse

Those belonging to faith communities should be aware of the possibility of spiritual abuse. The misuse of power within churches and religious groups has led, in extreme situations, to large numbers of followers committing suicide, such as occurred in Jonestown, Waco and Uganda. Leadership should not be so controlling or influential that it creates dependency and denies people choice and freedom, even to make mistakes. For further information, please refer to Parklands Church's separate *Spiritual Abuse Policy*.

7.3 Peer-on-peer abuse:

Where a vulnerable adult abuses the trust of another through some activity, this constitutes abuse. Such situations should be taken seriously and are investigated in the same way as cases involving non-vulnerable persons by the protection agencies. This is important, as the effect on the victim may be equally great, and the perpetrator may themselves be a victim. Abuse is addictive and there may be a chain of abusive behaviour. Peer-on-peer abuse may also occur online in the form of cyberbullying.

7.4 Elder abuse

Elder abuse in the UK is defined as a single or repeated act that causes harm or distress to an older person in a relationship where trust is expected. It can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, or neglect abuse. Abuse can occur in many places, including a person's home, a carer's home, day care, residential care, a nursing home, or a hospital. See <https://www.gov.uk/report-abuse-of-older-person>

8. Prevent Duty

8.1 Requirements by law

In July 2015, it was made statutory that all specified authorities comply with the Prevent Duty. Churches are generally not regarded as 'specified authorities', and Parklands Church does not meet the definition of a specified authority. However, although the duties do not legally apply to it, the church will still work in line with the principles of the Prevent Strategy, which was put in place to respond to the challenges of terrorism and the threat posed by those who promote terrorism.

The Prevent Strategy is used to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given the appropriate advice and support, and to work with sectors where there are risks of radicalisation.

8.2 Signs of radicalisation

Persons becoming radicalised may exhibit changes in emotion, such as :

- *becoming withdrawn*
- *becoming depressed*
- *becoming aggressive*
- *experiencing an identity crisis*

Persons becoming radicalised may exhibit physical or behavioural changes, including :

- *spending more time online*
- *becoming isolated*
- *having new peers*
- *significant changes to their appearance*

Verbal changes may include :

- *becoming judgemental*
- *being argumentative*
- *recounting extremist narratives*
- *undergoing a personal crisis*

Staff and volunteers should be aware that radicalisation often happens online.

For more information, please speak to the Safeguarding Team and refer to the current Prevent Strategy guidelines, which are available at :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

9. Responding to the abused

9.1 Maintaining confidentiality

Sometimes a vulnerable adult will want to talk to someone about abuse (known as “making a disclosure”). This can occur at any time, but may follow a specific activity. They may feel comfortable with a helper or volunteer they have got to know and trust.

If a vulnerable adult makes a disclosure, workers should remember that their welfare is paramount. The issue of confidentiality should be raised at the outset. The worker should let the vulnerable adult know they are concerned about them, and explain that someone else will have to be told. They should not promise confidentiality, or to keep secret what they have been told. Workers *must* pass the information on.

This phrase may be helpful to use :

“I’m worried about what you have told me today. I will have to talk to somebody else about what we can do next.”

If a vulnerable adult displays behaviour that gives cause for concern but is not a full disclosure, workers should log their concern using an online *Wellbeing Concern Form*, available on the church *Hub* (see Section 17).

9.2 Listening to a disclosure

In the case of any disclosure, the main aim of the church worker is to listen. Their manner should be:

- *Non-threatening*
- *Non-possessive*
- *Calm*
- *Concerned*

Workers should try not to put words into the vulnerable adult’s mouth or to ask leading questions. It is acceptable, however, to use open-ended questions for clarification using the **TED** technique. It is acceptable to ask the vulnerable adult to :

- T** - Tell
- E** - Explain
- D** - Describe

9.3 How to respond to a disclosure – dos and don’ts

The outcome for a vulnerable adult following a disclosure is influenced by the response they first receive. If a vulnerable adult tells you something which makes you suspect that he or she is being (or has been) abused or neglected :

- *Do take the vulnerable adult to a comfortable place to talk*
- *Do listen to what the vulnerable adult has to say, and make sure they know you take it seriously. Show acceptance*
- *Do accept what you hear without passing judgment or investigating*
- *Do reassure the vulnerable adult that he or she did the right thing in telling you*
- *Do tell the vulnerable adult that you will get them the help they need*
- *Do explain to the vulnerable adult that you will have to tell someone, in a way appropriate to their mental capacity and emotional state*
- *Don’t promise to keep what you have been told you a secret*

- *Don't comment on or attribute blame for the abuse*
- *Don't tell the vulnerable adult how you think they are feeling*
- *Don't ask for further details*
- *Don't ask leading questions*
- *Don't ask the vulnerable adult to repeat what they have said to anyone else*
- *Avoid showing your own emotions or feelings about the abuse*
- *Don't assume anything about the vulnerable adult's experience*
- *Don't offer false reassurance*
- *Don't panic, or show that you are shocked or alarmed*
- *Do promptly report the disclosure, following the procedure in Section 10 below*

9.4 Taking notes about the disclosure

If a vulnerable adult tells you something which makes you suspect that he or she is being abused or neglected:

- If you can, jot down some notes during the disclosure. Write down what you have been told, using the vulnerable adult's exact words as far as possible. Include the date, time, place and the names of any other people present, and sign and date it. It is good practice to confirm with the vulnerable adult that what you have written is an accurate reflection of what they meant.
- Include your observations of any non-verbal behaviour, the context of the disclosure and what you saw, heard and did. Log everything you remember.
- If it was not possible to make a written note of the details during the disclosure, do so as soon as possible afterwards. This record will be shared with the Safeguarding Team.

10 How to report a disclosure

- 10.1 It is vital that despite any misgivings, you report concerns as soon as possible. If the disclosure was made during a church activity, your first point of contact will be the Senior Leader of that activity. Inform them that a disclosure has been made, and they will then relay the matter to the Safeguarding Team. If the Senior Leader is not available or the disclosure concerns them, contact one of the Safeguarding Team Leads directly (see Section 15.2).
- 10.2 Complete the online Disclosure Form, which can be found on the church website in the *Hub* section at [Disclosure Form · ChurchSuite Forms](#), using your handwritten notes as a reference. Do not destroy the originals of your notes, but hand them in to the Safeguarding Team or email a copy with the online Disclosure Form. The Safeguarding Team may need these notes in order to complete a referral.
- 10.3 The Safeguarding Team will take the appropriate action upon receipt of a verbal report or an online Disclosure Form. The Safeguarding Team are responsible for progressing any allegation and for contacting the correct authorities as necessary. You must not take any further action, or attempt to investigate your concerns.
- 10.4 Parklands Church encourages the reporting of any misgivings or concerns as soon as possible, no matter how insignificant they may seem. Your information may help contribute to a bigger picture.
- 10.5 All information to do with any and all disclosures or the reporting of concerns will be kept securely and confidentially in line with the church's separate Privacy and GDPR Policies. These are available to view online at <https://www.parklandschurch.org.uk/privacy/>.
- 10.6 If a staff member or volunteer has serious concerns about a vulnerable adult but is unsure whether abuse has occurred, they should contact the Safeguarding Team Leads using the details in Section 15.2.

11. Alternative reporting

If for any reason an individual feels unable to report a concern or disclosure to the church directly, they may contact one of the external agencies using the contact information in Section 16.

12. If the allegation relates to a church worker or leader

12.1 Reporting an allegation

Parklands Church endeavours to foster a culture which allows all members of the congregation, staff and volunteers to feel able to share information or concerns they may have about a church worker or leader's behaviour in relation to a vulnerable adult. This includes behaviour that has pushed the communication or contact boundaries beyond acceptable limits. Staff and volunteers must also feel safe and comfortable to raise concerns about:

- *poor / unsafe practice*
- *potential failures in workplace procedures*
- *the safeguarding regime of their setting*

It is important that allegations or even suspicions about another church worker or leader are not dismissed. Where an allegation relating to a vulnerable adult concerns a team worker or leader, or a church leader :

- concerns should be reported directly to the Safeguarding Team (see Section 15.2)
- the church worker or leader should not be confronted, or informed of the nature of the allegation

12.2 Procedure following the making of an allegation

When dealing with allegations relating to a vulnerable adult against a church worker or leader :

- The welfare of the vulnerable adult will be considered of paramount importance
- The church worker or leader will not be informed of the allegation until the appropriate advice has been sought by the Safeguarding Team from the appropriate external body, eg the police or Social Services. Safeguarding organisation *Thirtyone:eight* is also available for advice
- It is not the responsibility of the person making the allegation to determine its validity, to judge whether or not the allegation is true, or to investigate it further in any way
- All allegations will be treated in the same way, whether historical or current
- An investigation against a church worker or leader may have three related, but independent, strands :
 - *adult protection enquiries, relating to the safety and welfare of any adult(s) who are or may have been involved*
 - *a police investigation into a possible offence against a vulnerable adult*
 - *disciplinary procedures, where it appears that the allegations may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct on the part of the worker or leader, including suspension as a neutral act*
- Even if no legal action is taken, an assessment may still be needed in relation to the church worker or leader's approach to safeguarding
- The decision to suspend a church worker or leader will rest with the church's Senior Leadership Team, based on the nature of the allegation made

12.3 Investigating an allegation

Within a faith community, consideration will also be given to whether the vulnerable adult and worker or leader need to be kept separate. It may be necessary for the worker or leader to attend another place of worship while the investigation is proceeding.

If the police are involved in investigating an allegation, an internal investigation will not normally take place. However, where disciplinary action needs to be taken, agreement from the police will be sought beforehand.

If the allegation is substantiated and where an organisation dismisses the person or ceases to use their services, or the person ceases to provide his or her services, one of the Safeguarding Team Leads will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

13. Factors affecting the making of disclosures

13.1 Overcoming potential barriers to reporting concerns

Parklands Church recognises that a number of factors may interfere with recognising abuse or prevent the reporting of concerns. These may include :

- *assuming the problem is already known*
- *unfamiliarity with the policy and procedures*
- *fear of being wrong*
- *disbelief, especially if it involves someone the worker knows*
- *fear of what might happen to the vulnerable adult or anyone in their family*
- *concern about the future relationship with the vulnerable adult and/or their parent(s), partner or carer*
- *concern about a relationship with a colleague*

There may also be factors which might make a vulnerable adult reluctant to report what is happening to them. For the vulnerable adult, the barriers may be:

- *fear that the abuser will harm them further*
- *feeling responsible in some way for the abuse*
- *negative feelings, such as shame*
- *not knowing who to tell or trust*
- *fear of the consequences of reporting the abuse*
- *fear of not being believed or taken seriously*
- *fear of everyone knowing*
- *disability*
- *anxiety about potential family breakdown*
- *not realising that what is happening is wrong*
- *experiencing some benefit from the abuse*

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and to ensure any concerns they have are promptly reported. Any staff or volunteer reluctant to report due to any of the factors above is encouraged to talk them through at the earliest opportunity with their Team Leader or another church leader.

13.2 Cultural differences

Crucial to any assessment is a knowledge and sensitivity to racial, cultural and religious patterns. While these different practices must be taken into account, they should not override basic human rights.

Different approaches to child rearing or attitudes to disability do not excuse what in Britain would be regarded as abuse.

13.3 The effect of abuse on faith

In a faith community, the effect of abuse on a person's faith should be taken into account. Those who are abused may suffer from problems of poor self-image and blame. They may feel dirty or unlovable and their self-esteem may be affected. They may tell themselves *'God couldn't love me – I'm too bad'*.

It is important to stress to those who are abused that they are not to blame for the abuse. Sensitive pastoral support can help people to accept that God loves them just they are, no matter what has happened to them.

Romans 8:35-39 asks whether anything or anyone can separate us from the love of God. The clear answer is no, nothing can. As this truth begins to dawn on a person who has been abused, their self-esteem and confidence are able to grow. They also need to know that they will not be rejected by their church family because of any 'shameful' things that have happened to them.

John 15:12 says, *'Love each other as I have loved you'*.

14. Pastoral care after a disclosure has been made

14.1 Supporting those affected by abuse

The effects of abuse can be devastating and long-term, not only for adult survivors but also for their family, friends and other social groups. Parklands Church will make every effort to respond with care and compassion to those in need. The church recognises that some people may need professional help.

14.2 Supporting those to whom a disclosure has been made

Hearing an account of abuse can be very distressing for the person to whom it was made. The church's Pastoral Team will work with the Senior Leader to provide care, support and prayer to such a person. The team will not be told details, as this is highly confidential, but support will be offered to anyone who may need it.

The church encourages persons to whom a disclosure has been made to ensure they look after themselves, and to seek support from their Team Leaders and/or the church's Pastoral Team at any time if they are concerned about their wellbeing or mental health.

14.3 Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending Parklands Church is known to have abused children or adults in the past, is under investigation, or where concerns have been raised that an individual may pose a risk, a special Safeguarding Supervision Team composed of persons with level 3 safeguarding training will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care.

The Safeguarding Supervision Team representatives will comprise the church's Senior Elder (Matt Crome), its church Safeguarding Officer (Sarah Price), one of the Safeguarding Team Leads (Meryl Williams or Jane de Rooy), the Trustee responsible for safeguarding (Mark Campion) and anyone else deemed by the Team to be necessary (such as the person responsible for the individual's pastoral support, or a person with wider knowledge of the background to the concern).

The Safeguarding Supervision Team will set out appropriate boundaries to be imposed to protect children and adults, which the individual will be required to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and developed through consultation with appropriate parties, and a written Safeguarding Agreement will be drawn up. If an individual is currently under the supervision of a Probation Officer, the Safeguarding Supervision Team will endeavour to liaise with their Probation Officer.

The circumstances will be explained to the individual in such a way as to promote understanding and support, whilst at the same time ensuring that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults takes priority. Where the individual has a Probation Officer, the Probation Officer's recommendations on the church's management of the situation will be sought.

When working with offenders, past offenders and those who may pose a risk, the church's overriding priority will always be the safeguarding of children, vulnerable adults and all others in its congregation. Although it will do all that is reasonably practicable to integrate such persons, safeguarding considerations will always take precedence.

Parklands Church reserves the right to prohibit an individual who poses a potential risk coming onto church premises if they refuse to honour the boundaries set. Arrangements will be kept under review and reassessed on a regular basis. If an offender or past offender ceases to attend the church, statutory agencies and others will be informed as appropriate.

If a concern is raised, a referral will be made if appropriate following the process set out in Section 15 of this Policy.

15. The Safeguarding Team at Parklands Church

15.1 Roles and responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team

The Safeguarding Team at Parklands Church comprises two Leads, supported by a wider team. As well as dealing with any disclosures, the Safeguarding Leads are also responsible for delivering training to those who work with children and vulnerable adults in the wider church family.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Team to follow up any concern or disclosure reported to them and to take the necessary action. Under no circumstances should a worker or volunteer investigate matters themselves.

The Safeguarding Team will give consideration when making a referral as to whether to discuss any such referral with the child's parents or carers. They will seek agreement where possible for the referral to be made, but not if it compromises the safety of the child or young person.

In situations where abuse is suspected or alleged to have been perpetrated by the parent or carer of the child or young person, consent of the parent or carer will not be sought. By doing so the child or young person might be placed at further risk of significant harm, for example, further physical or sexual abuse.

The Safeguarding Team may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, such as the Lead Trustee responsible for safeguarding (see 15.2 below). The Lead Trustee may then need to liaise with the church's insurance company or the Charity Commission to report a serious incident.

Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those listed in Section 15.2 below.

The Safeguarding Supervision Team described above in section 14.3 is part of the wider Safeguarding Team.

15.2 Individuals in Parklands Church with responsibility for safeguarding

Safeguarding Team Leads :

Jane de Rooy

jane.derooy@parklandschurch.org.uk

07562 147 784

Meryl Williams

meryl.williams@parklandschurch.org.uk

07584 484 679

Wider Safeguarding Team, supporting the above :

Ian Stevenson

Suzie Willson

Tim Rees

Senior Leader with responsibility for Safeguarding :

Matt Crome

matt.crome@parklandschurch.org.uk

07453 591 026

Lead Trustee for Safeguarding :

Mark Campion

mark.campion@parklandschurch.org.uk

07806 785 782

15.3 How to report concerns about the Safeguarding Team, a Church Elder or the Lead Trustee

If the disclosure implicates the Safeguarding Team or a Church Elder, then the person who received it should report to the Lead Trustee (see Section 15.2 above).

Should the Lead Trustee be implicated, then a report should be made to the Christian Safeguarding organisation *Thirtyone:eight* by telephoning 0303 003 1111, or by writing to :

Thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133

SWANLEY BR8 7UQ

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/>

Alternatively if the matter is urgent, the police or Social Services should be contacted (see section 16 below).

16. External contacts

Swansea Social Services

01792 635700 (Monday – Thursday 8.30 – 5.00 pm and Fridays 8.30 – 4.30 pm)
<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/contactsocialservices>

Swansea City Council Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

email singlepointofcontact@swansea.gov.uk

Social Services Emergency Duty Team

01792 775501
email EDT@swansea.gov.uk

Police

If a criminal act has taken place, the police should be contacted on either 01792 456999 or 101. In serious emergencies, dial 999.

Thirtyone:eight

PO Box 133
SWANLEY BR8 7UQ
<https://thirtyoneeight.org/>
0303 003 1111

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

[NSPCC Helpline | NSPCC](#)
0808 800 5000

Safeguarding Wales

The national Safeguarding Procedures for Wales can be found online on the *Safeguarding Wales* website at :

<https://www.safeguarding.wales>

Safeguarding Wales has produced an application called *Wales Safeguarding Procedures* which contains resources relating to child protection and safeguarding. This app is downloadable from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

17. Parklands Church Hub - online forms for reporting concerns

Forms for reporting general concerns, well-being concerns and disclosures are available on the Hub on the Parklands Church website at <https://www.parklandschurch.org.uk/Hub/>.

For persons without access to computers, paper copies of the forms can be made available by the church administrator or Team Leaders upon request. All information submitted via online forms is kept strictly confidential.

17.1 Concern Form

Persons who wish to raise any safeguarding concerns regarding the Senior Leader or an Elder, should use the online *Concern Form*. This form goes directly to the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding and the Chair of the Trustees, who will review it and initiate the necessary action.

17.2 Wellbeing Concern Form and Ongoing Report – Wellbeing Form

Wellbeing Concern Forms and *Ongoing Report - Wellbeing Forms* are for use by team members and members of the public in reporting any behaviour that gives cause for concern, but which is not a full disclosure. This could relate to another member of the congregation, a child or young person. A report should be made using an online *Wellbeing Concern Form*, available on the church's *Hub* page.

Wellbeing Concern Forms are received by the Senior Leader and relevant Staff Member, who monitor and review concerns received on an individual basis. They will follow the relevant policy in each case in consultation with the Safeguarding Team Leads.

Further information, updates or concerns noted after having made an initial report can be submitted online using the church's *Ongoing Report - Wellbeing Form*.

17.3 Disclosure Form

Disclosure Forms are for use by team members and members of the public in reporting a disclosure of abuse which has been received by them. *Disclosure Forms* go straight to the Safeguarding Team, who will review the concerns and initiate the necessary action.

17.4 Retention of forms

All online forms relating to wellbeing concerns and disclosures will be stored securely online and confidentially in line with the church's separate Privacy and GDPR Policies, which are available online at:

<https://www.parklandschurch.org.uk/privacy/>

DECLARATION

I certify that I have received and read a copy of Parklands Church's
Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Handbook

..... *full name of worker or volunteer
(in BLOCK CAPITALS)*

..... *signature*

..... *date*

..... *countersignature of member of
Safeguarding Team*