

Parishes of the Meon Bridge Benefice Safeguarding Policy 2021-22

<http://www.bridgechurches.org.uk/contact-us>

The Parishes of The Meon Bridge Benefice (Corhampton and St Andrew, Meonstoke, St Mary and All Saints, Droxford and St Peter and St Paul, Exton) are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children within our church community and to encouraging an environment where all people and especially those who may be vulnerable are able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety.

We are also committed to the implementation of the Diocese of Portsmouth Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance for the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. (<https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/safeguarding> and <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding>).

Benefice Safeguarding Policy Statement

Every year the PCCs will review and agree the Benefice Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy Statement, displaying each copy in the Church and forwarding one copy of each to the Diocesan Safeguarding Office for their records.

Parish Safeguarding Officer

The PCCs will appoint a minimum of one Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) who will be responsible on behalf of the incumbent and PCC for implementing the Diocesan policy in respect of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The PSO agrees to undertake the key responsibilities of the role as outlined in the Diocesan Safeguarding Guide. Our PSO is Mrs Ali Pepper.

Promoting a safer environment and culture

We will ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to safeguard vulnerable groups in order that they can participate fully in any pastoral, social and other PCC endorsed or approved activities and events, safe from harm and abuse.

The following activities and events have been identified as those which are associated with vulnerable groups and run in the name of the church:

- **Children's Activities, Groups and Events**

The following children's, young person's and mixed age activities have been identified as PCC endorsed events and activities that fall under the Diocesan Safeguarding Procedures.

- All Age Informal Worship (Droxford and Meonstoke)
- Confirmation and Older Children's Group

Currently (February 2022), there are no other events where children are left without their parents or carers.

- **Vulnerable Adults Activities, Groups and Events**

The following have been identified as PCC endorsed groups, events and activities that fall under the Diocesan Safeguarding Procedures:

- Pastoral Care Visiting
- Parish morning coffee
- Home Communion

For these events, we will:

- Designate a group leader where necessary
- Ensure all children and young people wishing to attend any activity supervised by Benefice staff or nominees will be provided with a Registration Form, which must be completed and signed by their parents/carers before they take part.
- Ensure that children who wish to take part in additional events such as church outings, holidays or sleepovers will not be allowed to participate in such activities unless the leaders of such event(s) receive a

completed consent form from the parents or guardians of the child concerned, even if the parent or guardian accompanies the child on any such trip or activity. A new form must be completed for each separate activity.

- Give consideration at all times for the health, safety and welfare of each child and young person, including supervision ratios, transport, first aid, premises and children with special needs.
- Give consideration at all times for the health, safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult, including transport, first aid, premises and adults with special needs.
- Ensure risk assessments are carried out before the activity takes place and these are reviewed regularly
- Provide appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the Benefice PCCs

Hire of Church Premises

- All those who book or use the church premises on a regular basis shall be required to sign a copy of the parish booking agreement and a declaration that they have read and understand the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, or that they agree to abide by their own organisation's safeguarding procedures.

Safer Recruitment of paid workers and volunteers

We are committed to ensuring that all church officers are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have the core skills and knowledge to protect children and/or adults from harm. The Diocesan Safeguarding Training and Development Policy and Pathways sets out the expectations and requirements for safeguarding training for all ordained and lay church officers, whether they are paid or unpaid (<https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/safeguarding/training>).

We will:

- Ensure we have clear role descriptions and/or person specifications for all posts working or volunteering with children and/or adults
- Ensure we carry out all necessary vetting procedures (see below)
- Ensure that all applicants with children and adults are interviewed
- Offer support and training after appointment
- Provide a written behaviour code for all workers with children and/or adults
- Ensure all church leaders and those who work with children and/or adults complete appropriate safeguarding training at least every three years.

All those who undertake work in a regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults in the parishes on a voluntary or paid basis will be required to:

- Complete a Confidential Self Declaration Form
- To complete the necessary DBS application (DBS) every five years, or sooner if the individual moves to a new post, (unless the application was obtained in the previous six months and the nature of the work is similar).

We will seek to ensure that a DBS check is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position (paid or voluntary) concerned. Using the appropriate risk assessment procedures, the following parish posts have been identified as requiring a DBS check:

- The Parish Safeguarding Officer(s)
- Members of the PPC (as Trustees of the charity)
- Church wardens
- Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) and other Lay Leaders
- Messy Church Leader
- Regular helpers at Messy Church (3 or more sessions per academic year)
- All Age Service volunteer helpers
- Organists, when there are children or young children in the choir
- Leader / Conductor of the choir, when there are children or young children in the choir

Any person refusing such checks will not be allowed to work with or have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults in the Benefice.

All Confidential Self Declarations Forms, references and results of DBS checks will be held securely by the PSO.

Responding to safeguarding concerns

We will ensure that anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the church will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with legislation, statutory and national safeguarding policy and procedures.

We will:

- Appoint at least one lay Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for children and adults
- Ensure there are arrangements in place to cover if the PSO is not available
- Develop a written procedure for dealing with abuse and allegations and make this available to all church officers
- Clearly display contact details of the PSO and the Diocesan Safeguarding team, as well as local and national services available to get help with safeguarding issues
- Store personal information and safeguarding records securely and ensure information needed in an emergency is readily available
- Ensure all church officers are aware of their responsibilities in regard to the recording, storage and sharing of information

Care of Survivors of abuse

We will ensure that those who have suffered abuse will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and taken seriously.

Managing risk

When it is known that a member of the church community may pose a risk to children and/or adults, we will consult without delay with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser so that a safe course of action in accordance with national and local safeguarding policy and procedures is followed, in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC and amended as appropriate.

SIGNED AND AGREED:

Incumbent:	_____	<u>The Rev'd A W Forrest</u>	
Churchwarden/s:	_____	<u>Mrs A Peagram</u>	<u>Corhampton and</u>
	_____	_____	<u>Meonstoke</u>
	_____	<u>Sheila Matthissen</u>	<u>Droxford</u>
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	<u>Mr R Pepys</u>	<u>Exton</u>
Safeguarding Representative/s:	_____	<u>Mrs Ali Pepper</u>	
Interim Check:	<u>8 February 2022</u>		
Approved:	<u>3 December 2020</u>	Review Date:	<u>By 31 May 2022</u>

NB Droxford CW from Oct 2021 is Colin Matthissen

Parishes of the Meon Bridge Benefice Policy Statement for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults 2022

<http://www.bridgechurches.org.uk/contact-us>

The following policy statement was originally agreed at the PCC meeting held in December 2020 (to be reviewed next in May 2022)

The Parishes of The Meon Bridge Benefice (Corhampton and St Andrew, Meonstoke, St Mary and All Saints, Droxford and St Peter and St Paul, Exton) are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children within our church community, and to encouraging an environment where all people and especially those who may be vulnerable are able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety.

We are also committed to the implementation of the Diocese of Portsmouth Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance for the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. (<https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/safeguarding> and <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding>). We see this policy as a positive way of protecting all parties in our work.

As members of the PCCs, we recognise that our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church community. As such, we will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all, especially the young and vulnerable.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse and respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working with the Diocese and fully cooperate with them and other statutory agencies during any investigation into abuse, in order to assist in bringing to justice anyone who has committed an offence.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse and their families, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Ensure that pastoral care is made available to any members of our church community against whom an allegation is made
- In partnership with the diocese, ensure that care and supervision is provided for any member of the church community known to have committed an offence or pose a risk to children/vulnerable adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Benefice Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Parish Safeguarding Officer and Lead Recruiter Validator	Mrs Alison Pepper
E-mail	safeguarding@droxford.org
Phone Number	01489 877928

SIGNED AND AGREED:

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Parishes of the Meon Bridge Benefice Safeguarding Training Policy 2022

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The Parishes of The Meon Bridge Benefice (Corhampton and St Andrew, Meonstoke, St Mary and All Saints, Droxford and St Peter and St Paul, Exton) are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children within our church community, and to encouraging an environment where all people and especially those who may be vulnerable are able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety.

We are also committed to the implementation of the Diocese of Portsmouth Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance for the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. (<https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/safeguarding> and <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding>) and remaining up-to-date in the best practice by following the Diocese's Training Policy: (https://cofeportsmouth.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2017/03/Safeguarding_Training_Policy_2017.pdf)

Policy

- The Benefice is committed to the Diocese's Policy of ensuring that all church officers working with vulnerable groups, including children, are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have the core skills and knowledge to protect them from harm.
- This policy sets out our shared expectations and requirements for safeguarding training for all ordained or lay church officers and leaders, whether they are paid or unpaid.
- This policy is based upon the Church of England Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training and Development 2017. We see this policy as a positive way of protecting all parties in our work.

Principles

Portsmouth Diocese provides a safeguarding training programme to all those church personnel outlined above. The purpose of the training on offer is to promote, inform and ensure that anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the church to a post or role is aware of the National and Diocesan safeguarding procedures, practice and expectations.

The safeguarding training programme is developed and delivered by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers and a team of locally based trainers. The team also works closely with statutory agencies and other organisations who can contribute to the effective development of the programme.

Experienced and skilled trainers deliver all face-to-face safeguarding training modules. Single trainers will also be supported by a suitable co-worker who can offer the appropriate guidance to participants if needed. It is the responsibility of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser to ensure that the co-worker has the capability and qualities required to act in this role.

Portsmouth Diocese offers a training pathway for church officers in aspects of safeguarding relevant to and commensurate with their role, and it is expected that all clergy and church officers pay due regard to the minimum requirements for safeguarding training outlined in this policy, unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so. The Diocese has its own codes of practice and reporting procedures and it is important that church officers understand safeguarding with the unique context of the church, regardless of their occupation. Therefore, no accreditation is given against the core safeguarding training modules for prior learning that has not been provided by the Church of England framework.

Anyone undertaking ministry training through the Diocese must have completed the appropriate safeguarding training before the Bishop can license them.

All safeguarding training events are evaluated after delivery to ensure the training programme on offer continues to meet the varying levels of expertise and responsibilities of church officers across the Diocese.

The Diocesan safeguarding team keeps records of attendance, and the take up of safeguarding training is regularly monitored with reminders sent to those who have not attended the relevant training. The reminder process may be escalated if individuals continue not to take up the appropriate training course for their role.

Procedure

Portsmouth Diocese provides a range of on-line and taught safeguarding courses within a modular programme. Each training module aims to equip all church officers, both volunteer and paid, with a better understanding of good safeguarding practice within the church. All new appointees to roles should attend/complete training in line with the modules specified in this document. Thereafter, attendance at refresher training is required every three years to keep knowledge and skills up to date.

Details of safeguarding training events are promoted through the Diocesan website and in safeguarding newsletters. Attendance must be booked in advance.

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Parishes of the Meon Bridge Benefice Lone Working Policy 2022

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The Benefice, like the Diocese of Portsmouth, is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all who, in the course of their work and ministry, may have to work alone, and this policy provides a framework for managing the risks presented by lone working, as well as identifying the responsibilities each person has in this situation. This policy relates to all church personnel who work out in the community and/or in other people's homes, or who work alone in churches or other establishments and are physically isolated from colleagues or family, without access to immediate assistance.

Principles

It is recognised that lone working is an everyday and essential practice for clergy and church workers, and it is therefore important that the additional risks that arise from this are fully understood. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the good practice guidance given in the Diocesan Safeguarding Handbook 'In Safe Hands', which also sets out the appropriate boundaries for preventing misunderstandings and reducing risks.

All workers and volunteers should avoid working alone if it is not necessary, and work with others where possible, however, if this is not feasible, they should be aware of the importance of personal safety, and take all reasonable precautions to safeguard themselves from harm, as they would in any other circumstances.

Each Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for ensuring that all lone working activities within the church are formally identified, and appropriate risk assessments are undertaken in order to identify and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk, issues such as the place of meeting, security, the risk of violence and the nature of the task or activity should be considered alongside any other factors appropriate to the circumstances, such as the lone worker's health and fitness, age and gender.

The perception of risk can be seen differently by each individual, and, therefore, it is important that all lone workers receive relevant information about the identified risks within their role, in order that they are equipped to recognise these, and are enabled to take responsibility for their own safety and security.

All risks identified to workers arising from lone working must be recorded, in accordance with requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Each Parish must ensure that it has adequate insurance in place to cover all lone working activities which have been formally identified by a risk assessment.

Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker, consideration should be given by the parish to undertake other arrangements to complete the task or activity, such as ensuring individuals work in pairs.

Procedure

It is important not to over-emphasise the risks of lone working, and create an unnecessary fear amongst workers that is disproportionate to the reality of the risks faced. However, lone workers do face increased risks because

they do not have the immediate support of colleagues, or others, if an incident occurs, and particularly if they are in someone's home, or are working in an isolated or rural location.

The following guidance is, therefore, intended to reflect good practice in relation to the protection of lone workers, and can also be used by churches to develop their own local procedures.

Working Alone in Church or at another Building

Within this document, lone working refers to situations where individuals, in the course of their duties, work alone or are physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance. In this regard, PCC's should ensure that they:

- Undertake a risk assessment on building safety to determine if the church/building needs extra security. For example, spy holes, door chains or outside lighting can all help to safely identify callers.
- Consider how lone workers will raise the alarm if necessary, and ensure they have a means of communicating with others in the event a problem arises.
- Agree a protocol for visitors to the building; and decide whether or not to allow visitors in when only one person is there.

No worker should ever plan to be alone on church premises with children or young people. However, if they should find themselves in this situation, it is important that another adult is made aware immediately. The worker should also assess the risks involved in sending the child or young person home, against the risks and vulnerability of being alone with them.

Personal Safety

Whilst the PCC has a responsibility to ensure their lone workers' health, safety and welfare, there are also a number of things individuals can do to take reasonable care of themselves.

Lone workers should never put themselves at risk. If a situation arises that they are unfamiliar with, or in which they feel unsafe, they should withdraw and seek further advice or assistance.

Staff and volunteers should conduct their own risk assessment on the occasions when they are working alone, which will help them to decide how safe a situation is and what action should be taken to avoid danger

Lone workers should be aware of themselves, their behaviour and the signals they may be giving, and to think about their body language, tone of voice and the choice of words they use with others that could be taken as confrontational.

Staff and volunteers who work alone also need to be aware of changes in the behaviour of the person they are with, especially if they seem to become more angry or threatening.

Should an incident occur – even if it is considered a minor incident – the worker should make the Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer know as soon as possible in order that the appropriate risk assessment and follow-up action can be taken.

Staff and volunteers should take every reasonable precaution to ensure that they do not disclose their personal details, such as address and telephone number or their social networking profile, without good reason.

Home Visits

Home visits can be potentially risky situations, and therefore each PCC is responsible for ensuring that appropriate risk management measures are in place before a home visit is undertaken, which may include ensuring that staff and volunteers work in pairs on a first visit. Lone workers should also be aware of their responsibilities in ensuring their personal safety when visiting people in their own homes.

Lone workers should always ensure that someone else (e.g. incumbent, colleague, family member) is aware of their movements. This means providing them with the address of where they will be visiting, details of the person they are visiting, telephone numbers if known and expected arrival and departure times.

All staff and volunteers who work in the community, and undertake home visits should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times, which is in good working order and that signal is checked before entering the premises.

All homes visits should be recorded, as clear and detailed record keeping may prevent problems in the future.

No member of staff or volunteer should ever undertake a visit to a child, young person or vulnerable adult in their home unless another adult is present.

Lone workers should be alert to any signs of potential danger during a home visit, and be prepared to leave immediately if they have any concerns. Confrontation should always be avoided, and lone workers should never assume that violence will not happen, as while there are many home visits made safely every day, personal safety is paramount. Any incidents should be reported to the Incumbent and/or the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

Staff and volunteers who undertake home visits should ask the person they are visiting if they can secure any pets they many have which may present a safety risk.

Where possible, home visits should be conducted in the morning or early afternoon, rather than the evening or late afternoon, in order to avoid travelling in the dark, particularly in areas that they don't know well. If this is not feasible, consideration should be given to working in pairs.

Records

A regular record of all pastoral encounters should be kept and include details such as date, time, subject and actions to be taken. It is important to keep factual records, and separate these from any opinions expressed. All records should be held in a secure, locked cabinet at the Rectory and retained in line with the guidance provided in the Diocesan Safeguarding Handbook and Benefice Retention Guidelines.

Review

The Lone Working Policy will be reviewed and revised annually in response to new legislation, policies or guidance or specific demand and feedback.

SIGNED AND AGREED:

Incumbent:	_____	<u>The Rev'd A W Forrest</u>	
Churchwarden/s:	_____	<u>Mrs A Peagram</u>	<u>Corhampton and</u>
	_____		<u>Meonstoke</u>
	_____	<u>Sheila Matthissen</u>	<u>Droxford</u>
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