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# Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

## Policy and Procedures 2015

Diocese of Liverpool



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**Contact details**

Parish Vulnerable Adults Protection Coordinator

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Diocesan Vulnerable Adults Adviser

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Diocesan Child Protection Adviser

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

DBS Enquiries

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Diocesan Communications Director

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Police

Name /Local Office.....

Telephone Number.....

Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub - Social Care for Children/Vulnerable Adults

Name / Local Office.....

Telephone Number.....

## **The House of Bishops Policy Statement on safeguarding adults in the Church of England**

The Church of England is committed to encouraging an environment where all people and especially those who may be vulnerable for any reason are able to worship and pursue their faith journey with encouragement and in safety. Everyone, whether they see themselves as vulnerable or not, will receive respectful pastoral ministry recognising any power imbalance within such a relationship.

All church workers involved in any pastoral ministry will be recruited with care, the workers will receive training and continuing support.

Any allegations of mistreatment, abuse, harassment or bullying will be responded to without delay. Whether or not the matter involves the church there will be cooperation with the police and local authority in any investigation.

Sensitive and informed pastoral care will be offered to anyone who has suffered abuse, including support to make a complaint if so desired: help to find appropriate specialist care either from the church or secular agencies will be offered.

### **Principles Underlying the Policy**

Christian communities should be places where all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. The Church is particularly called by God to support those at the margins, those less powerful and those without a voice in our society. The Church can work towards creating a safe and non-discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the particular situations that create vulnerability. Issues which need to be considered include both the physical environment and the attitudes of workers.

A person who might be considered vulnerable has the right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity;
- have their privacy respected;
- be able to lead as independent a life as possible;
- should be appropriately supported so that they are able to choose how to lead their life;
- have the protection of the law;
- have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background;
- be able to use their chosen language or method of communication;
- be heard.

## **Policy for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults**

This Diocese of Liverpool Vulnerable Adults policy contains the information/guidance you may need. For more detailed information and guidance please refer to 'Promoting a Safe Church' booklet which is available from Church House Publishing, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3AZ, telephone 020 7898 1449, web site: [www.chpublishing.co.uk](http://www.chpublishing.co.uk). It can also be downloaded from the diocesan website by following this link: <http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/safeguarding>

Additional resources regarding Vulnerable Adults can be downloaded from the diocesan web site by following this link: <http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/Vulnerable-Adults> or for a hard copy of the resources please contact: Church & Society, St James' House, 20 St James Road, Liverpool, L1 7BY, tel 0151 705 2124

If you need advice and support on any Safeguarding issue relating to Vulnerable Adults or advice regarding the Disability Discrimination Act / equality Act and Mental capacity then please contact Ruth Reed, Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator, St James's House, 20 St James Road, Liverpool, L1 7BY, tel 0151 705 2161, e-mail: [ruth.reed@liverpool.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.reed@liverpool.anglican.org).

## **Implementing a policy in a parish**

Everyone, as a citizen, has a responsibility for the safety, well-being and protection of others. Everyone within the church community also has a responsibility to ensure that there is a welcome for all people, including those seen as vulnerable. A policy about the safeguarding of vulnerable people should be the concern of the whole congregation and therefore should be presented to the Parochial Church Council for adoption and be reaffirmed at least annually. This is an opportunity for church members to remember their commitment to one another.

The Parochial Church Council together with the incumbent carries a duty of care for the safety of those who attend or use the church. The Council should, with the help of the diocese, ensure that a policy is in place that reflects the need to safeguard vulnerable people and that it is being implemented and has appropriate resources. The Church Council needs to find ways to communicate the policy to the whole congregation. Clergy in particular need to be aware of the pastoral needs of vulnerable people, their carers and those that work with them.

It is recommended that a named individual be appointed by the PCC to act as the key person to speak on behalf of vulnerable People. All Adult Services Departments (or similar) have policies about the safeguarding of vulnerable peoples and will work in multi-agency collaboration with the health service and police.

Some parishes may find it difficult to appoint someone to undertake this responsibility. It may be more appropriate for this to be considered as an appointment within each deanery. However it must be remembered that each PCC is legally responsible for the activities in its own parish.

## **Recruitment and Selection – Appointment of Volunteers and Paid Workers**

We will use the House of Bishops policy on Safer Recruitment (2014) to guide our process. This policy applies to all workers whether in the children or adult workforce.

It is important that we make every effort to recruit safe people into post within our churches and discourage those who may not have the best interests of our vulnerable adults from applying; this can only be achieved by rigorous and safe recruitment.

### **Therefore the Parochial Church Council (PCC) should:**

- Decide on the candidates' suitability.  
This is based on their personal qualities in relation to general experience, aptitudes, skills, motivation and willingness to be trained.
- Check with the Disclosure and Barring Service against the specific post.  
As an employer you are legally required to establish the suitability of the applicant in terms of those barred from working with vulnerable adults prior to them entering the workforce. You are liable to prosecution if you fail to do so- this applies to both paid and voluntary posts.
- Be prepared to say "No" if the candidate is unsuitable.  
Encourage any such volunteer to another form of Christian service.
- Give the volunteer an agreement to ensure mutual understanding of the role.
- Confirm the successful applicant in post after a probationary period.
- Ensure safe storage of information: that includes all registration forms, references and confidential declaration forms. They should be stored in a safe and secure place within the parish in perpetuity. Be aware of your responsibility in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Further guidance is available on the diocesan web site.

## **Recruitment of Ex – Offenders**

### **The Diocesan Policy on the Recruitment of ex - offenders**

1. The Diocese is committed to the fair treatment of its parish staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical disability or offending background.
2. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
3. A Disclosure is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
4. Where a Disclosure is to form a part of the recruitment process, we encourage applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate confidential cover, to a designated person, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
5. Unless the nature of the position allows the Diocese to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
6. We ensure that all those in the Diocese who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
7. This policy should be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
8. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might relate to the position. Failure to disclose information that is directly relevant to the position sought may lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
9. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

**Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for us**

## **What does the term Vulnerable Adult mean?**

Human beings are, by their very nature, subject to the chances and changes of this world. Each one has strengths and weaknesses, capacities and restrictions. At some time everyone will be vulnerable to a wide range of pressures, concerns or dangers. No one is invulnerable; some people may consider themselves to be strong but, when circumstances change, strengths can quickly disappear. Some people by reason of their physical or social circumstances have higher levels of vulnerability than others. It is the Christian duty of everyone to recognize and support those who are identified as being more vulnerable. In supporting a vulnerable person we must do so with compassion and in a way that maintains dignity.

In order to bring into focus those people for whom the Church should have a particular care this working definition may be helpful:

A **vulnerable adult** is defined (by the Law Commission 2011) as a person over 18 years, who is or maybe in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

They may include:

- People with a mental health problem or mental illness (including addictions and dementia)
- People with a physical disability
- People with a sensory impairment
- People with a learning disability
- People who are frail and/or experiencing a temporary illness.

## **What we mean by 'Abuse'**

Abuse is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately, or unknowingly, causes him or her harm, endangers their life, or violates their rights.

Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, and financial or may arise through neglect.

Abuse may be perpetrated by an individual, a group or an organisation.

Abuse concerns the misuse of power; control and/or authority and can manifest itself as:

- Domestic violence, sexual assault or sexual harassment
- Racially or religiously motivated assaults
- Discrimination and oppression
- Institutional abuse

Abuse can take place in the person's home, day centre, family home, place of employment, community setting and in public places (including churches and ancillary buildings).

Any act of abuse, whether a single act or repeated, is a violation of the individual human and their civil rights.

## **Abuse can take various forms:**

### **Physical Abuse**

This is the ill treatment of an adult, which may or may not cause physical injury. It includes:

- Hitting
- Pushing
- Forcing
- Withholding or misuse of medication.
- Squeezing
- Drowning
- Slapping
- Kicking
- Restraining
- Biting
- Suffocation
- Killing

### **Emotional Abuse**

This is the use of threats or fear to negate the vulnerable person's independent wishes, it includes:

- Lack of privacy/choice
- Denial of dignity
- Deprivation of social contact/deliberate isolation
- Made to feel worthless
- Lack of love or affection
- Threats
- Humiliation
- Verbal attitude
- Blaming
- Controlling
- Pressuring
- Coercion
- Fear
- Ignoring the person

### **Neglect**

This is any pattern or behaviour by another person, which seriously impairs the individual, this can include:

- Failure to intervene in situations where there is danger to the vulnerable person or to others, particularly when a person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk
- Not giving personal care
- Deliberate withholding of aids such as hearing
- Withholding food, drink, light and clothing
- Restricting access to medical services
- Limiting choice
- Denial of social, religious, cultural contacts,
- Denial of contact with family
- Left alone unsupervised

### **Financial Abuse / Legal Abuse**

This is the wilful extortion or manipulation of vulnerable adults' legal or civil rights including misappropriation of monies or goods, it may include:

- Misuse of finances/lack of money
- Theft or fraudulent use of money
- Misuse of property or possessions
- Exploitation
- Embezzlement

### **Misuse of Medication**

- Withholding medication
- Deliberate poisoning
- Inappropriate use of medication

## **Sexual Abuse**

Any sexual act carried out without the informed consent of a vulnerable adult is abuse. It includes contact and non-contact abuse.

Non-contact abuse may include:

- Sexual remarks and suggestions
- Indecent exposure
- Downloading inappropriate materials
- Texting, emailing or tweeting of inappropriate material
- Introduction to indecent material
- Teasing

Contact Abuse may include:

- Indecent assault
- Sexual intercourse
- Touch
- Being forced to touch another person

## **Spiritual Abuse**

Within faith communities harm may be caused to vulnerable adults by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include:

- The misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline
- Oppressive teaching
- Obtrusive healing and deliverance ministries
- The denial of the rights to faith and religious practice

Any concerns in relation to these matters should be dealt with via the procedures outlined in guidelines in this Policy.

Spiritual growth and well-being among vulnerable adults can be enhanced by:

- Making reasonable arrangements for them to attend acts of worship
- Providing for dietary, dress and other requirements of faith
- Enabling adequate and reasonable access to them by representatives of their faith community
- Accepting the integrity of the person's religious belief and spirituality.

## **Factors which may lead to abuse**

Abuse can occur in any setting no matter where a person lives or where they are being cared for. Abuse can occur in residential or day care settings, in hospitals, in other people's homes churches and other places previously assumed safe, and in public places. Abuse is more likely to occur if the vulnerable adult:

- Rejects help
- Has a communication difficulty
- Has challenging behaviour
- Behaves in an unusual way
- Is not helpful or co-operative
- Is behaviourally disturbed or there are major changes in personality behaviour

Research has shown that mistreatment is more likely to occur if carers:

- Feel lonely or isolated and have no one to talk to
- Are under stress due to poor income or housing conditions
- Have other responsibilities i.e. work, family
- Are showing signs of physical or mental illness
- Are becoming dependant on alcohol or drugs
- Family relationships over the years have been poor

- Live where family violence is the norm

Other factors to look for include:

- Carer has their own problems
- Carer perceives the dependant adult as being deliberately awkward
- Vulnerable adult has few/no social contacts
- Vulnerable person cannot converse normally

### **Indicators of abuse**

The lists below are purely indicators. The presence of one or more does not necessarily confirm abuse.

#### **Physical Abuse:**

- A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries
- Bruising or burns of unusual location or type
- Finger marks
- Being excessively withdrawn and or compliant
- Appearing frightened of / avoiding physical contact

#### **Emotional Abuse:**

- Person in state of neglect
- Difficulty in making choices because they have never been allowed to make them for themselves
- Low self esteem
- Making derogatory statements about a person's ability when they are present

#### **Individual features:**

- Very eager to please and appear subservient
- Unusual weight gain / loss
- Inappropriately dressed
- Change in appetite
- Tearfulness
- Unkept and unwashed

#### **Financial Abuse:**

- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts
- Extraordinary interest by family members and other people in the vulnerable person's assets
- Inability to budget and pay bills that is out of character with previous behaviour
- When a trustee having the 'Power of Attorney' is not making appropriate arrangements for the use of that money or property. In such a case the Trustee should be informed of the good practice guidance that is available.

#### **Neglect:**

- Excessively and inappropriately craving attention
- Marked change in relationship between vulnerable adult and others
- Poor physical state of person and / or their home

#### **Sexual Abuse:**

- A change in the person's usual behaviour
- Withdrawal, choosing to spend the majority of time alone
- Overt sexual behaviour / language by the vulnerable person
- Self-inflicted injury
- Disturbed sleep pattern
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothes

Abuse can be intentional or unintentional, passive (e.g.) neglect, or active (e.g.) hitting. It may be part of a significant pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident. It can take place in the person's home, day centre, family home, community settings - anywhere.

A single act of abuse or repeated acts of abuse is a violation of the individual's human and civil rights. It is important to recognise the vulnerability and possible 'childlike' state of survivors, especially when they are in crisis or the early stages of healing. They can be over-compliant and easily manipulated. Power abuse within pastoral care is a real danger.

## **Dealing with reports of Abuse**

The adult Safeguarding Procedures identifies three distinct roles in the protection of vulnerable people. This comes from the Government's paper on Vulnerable Adults *Safe from Harm (2012)*:

- Alerters
- Investigators
- Managers

Lay people and Clergy act as Alerters. Their duty is:

- To report suspected acts of abuse
- To be alert to what abuse means and take seriously what they are told
- To think about what they see and ask if it is acceptable practice
- To work strictly in accordance with anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-ageist and anti-disability practices
- To ensure the safety of the person you suspect is being mistreated as well as your own safety
- To contact the emergency services first, e.g. police, ambulance, if in a life-threatening situation.
- To be alert to hints, signals and non-verbal communication that could indicate abuse, which is being denied or deliberately hidden.

What to do if someone discloses abuse to you:

- Stay calm and try not to show shock
- Listen carefully rather than question directly
- Be sympathetic
- Be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed

Tell the person that:

- They did right to tell you
- You are treating this information seriously
- It was not their fault

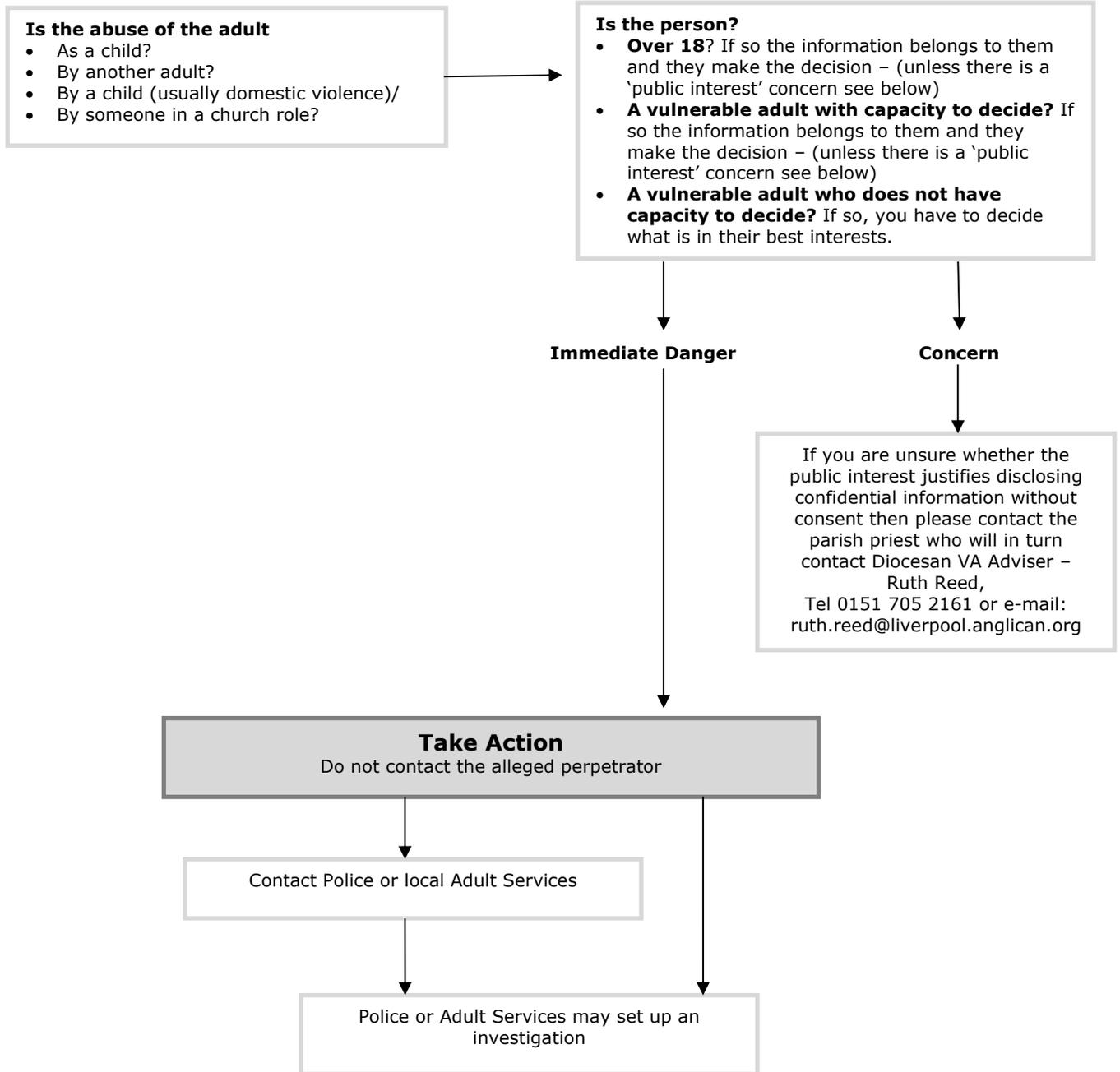
Lay people should then inform the parish priest. The Parish Priest will inform the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Adviser who will inform the Archdeacon.

### **DO NOT:**

- Press the person for more details
- Stop someone who is freely recalling significant events as they may not tell you again
- Promise to keep secrets: explain that the information will be kept confidential, i.e. information will only be passed to those people who have "a need to know"
- Make promises that you cannot keep (such as "This will not happen to you again")
- Contact the alleged abuser
- Be judgemental (e.g. "Why didn't you run away?")
- Pass on information to anyone who doesn't have a "need to know" i.e. do not gossip

**Please note if the case you are dealing with involves the abuse or suspected abuse of a child by a vulnerable adult then the child takes precedence and must be given priority. This should be reported using the procedures set out in Liverpool Diocese Safeguarding Children's Policy.**

## Vulnerable Adults Abuse Referral Flow Chart



### **A 'public interest concern' – how to decide**

"The key factors in deciding whether or not to share confidential information are necessity and proportionality, i.e. whether the proposed sharing is likely to make an effective contribution to preventing the risk and whether the public interest in sharing information overrides the interest in maintaining confidentiality. In making the decision you must weigh up what might happen if the information is shared against what might happen if it is not and make a decision based on professional judgement".

**Section 3.40 information sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers. HMSO 2010**

### **Contact Details:**

Diocesan VA Adviser – Ruth Reed  
Tel 0151 705 2161 or e-mail:  
[ruth.reed@liverpool.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.reed@liverpool.anglican.org)

## **Guidelines for parishes & clergy when working with Vulnerable Adults**

All volunteers who are official church volunteers are to carry identification for their role and official records of their function is to be kept in the parish.

Where people are visiting residential homes, etc., copies of the Diocesan policy should be made available to them if requested.

People should visit in pairs and volunteers should keep a detailed record of the visit.

The following is a list of people who are likely to need registration under the policy:

- Those who visit residential homes for the elderly
- Those who take Communion to the sick in their home, institution or hospital
- Those who are involved in luncheon clubs
- General community groups (a clause should be added to the hire of hall agreements to include vulnerable people)
- Those who visit people living in sheltered accommodation
- Those who undertake pastoral visiting in the parish
- Those who offer transport services
- Those likely to come into regular contact on their own, e.g. Verger

## **Role Description - Protection of Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator**

The PCC should appoint a Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) Co-ordinator as part of their 'Duty of Care'. They are also responsible for supporting the person they appoint in this role.

The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator is the first line within the parish setting, in conjunction with the Incumbent, for the development and implementation of the policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults.

### **Qualities of the Coordinator**

#### **The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator will demonstrate:**

- Tact
- Resilience
- Good communication skills
- Understanding of the issues surrounding vulnerable adults

### **Responsibilities of the Co-ordinator**

#### **The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Co-ordinator is responsible for:**

- Keeping a record of all activities that may be accessed by vulnerable adults.
- Keeping a list of all workers involved in these activities
- Ensuring that all workers have undergone appropriate recruitment procedures
- Ensuring all volunteers/paid workers have DBS clearance (if appropriate)
- Arranging for volunteers/paid workers to attend training via the Diocese in order to ensure best practise.

## **Resources**

### **Diocesan contacts**

Diocesan Vulnerable Adults Adviser: Ruth Reed, Tel 0151 705 2161/0151 705 2124,  
e-mail: [ruth.reed@liverpool.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.reed@liverpool.anglican.org)

### **Statutory Agencies**

Social Care (Adult Services) .....(please enter your local office number and out-of-hours numbers)

**Police** - 999 for emergencies - 101 for non emergencies

### **National Health Service**

999 for emergencies - 111 for health enquiries

### **Voluntary Organisations for people who may be vulnerable**

Action on Elder Abuse - telephone: 080 8808 8141- [www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk)

Age UK - telephone 0800 169 2081 - [www.ageconcern.org.uk](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk)

Alzheimer's Society - telephone 0300 222 1122 - [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Livability - telephone 0207 452 2000 - [www.livability.org.uk](http://www.livability.org.uk)

\*Working with disabled people for social inclusion, empowerment and justice

MENCAP - telephone 0808 808 1111 - [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

MIND — The National Association for Mental Health - tel 0300 123 3393 -  
[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

RNIB — The Royal National Institute for the Blind - telephone: 0303 123 9999  
[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

Action for Hearing Loss - telephone 0808 808 0123 - [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

Scope - telephone: 0808 800 3333 - [www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk) - The main national organisation for those with cerebral palsy

Through the Roof / Churches For All 01372 749955 [www.throughtheroof.org](http://www.throughtheroof.org) - Christian body who help to improve access of disabled people to the Church

## **Resources for adult survivors of abuse**

Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse , Address only: 38 Sydenham Villas Road, Cheltenham, Glocs - Support and self-help for survivors

MACSAS - telephone: 0808 801 0340- [www.macsas.org.uk](http://www.macsas.org.uk) - Support and networking for survivors of sexual abuse by those in ministry

NAPAC - telephone: 0800 801 0331 -[www.napac.org.uk](http://www.napac.org.uk) - National Association for People Abused in Childhood

RESPOND - telephone: 0808 808 0700 [www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk) - Supporting people with learning difficulties who have been abused

Survivors UK - [www.survivorsuk.org](http://www.survivorsuk.org) - Support for male survivors

S:Vox [www.svox.org.uk](http://www.svox.org.uk) - National Organisation for Survivors of abuse

## **Pastoral care**

Holyrood House: Centre for Health and Pastoral Care 01845 522850  
[www.holyroodhouse.org.uk](http://www.holyroodhouse.org.uk) - Offering counselling and psychotherapies

## **Relevant publications**

House of Bishops, Promoting a Safe Church: policy for safeguarding adults in the Church of England, 2006. Church House Publishing

No Secrets, Department of Health, 2000. Available from Department of Health, P0 Box, London SE1 6XH, or from:  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4008486](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4008486)

Safeguarding Adults: a national framework of standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection, ADSS, 2010.

Time for Action: A report of Sexual Abuse Issues. 2002. Church House Publishing.