

## ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT TO APCM 2023

### **Policies and practice**

The clergy and PCCs of the benefice continue to meet the requirement to have due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at every meeting of the PCCs.

All safeguarding policies were updated and approved in February 2023 at both PCC meetings (PCC of Wellow on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and PCC of the St. J's Group {Peasedown with Foxcote and Shoscombe on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023}). The next reviews will be in February 2024.

Recently, the Rector and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) have undertaken a benefice safeguarding audit using the new dioceses' Safeguarding Dashboards which shows what measures we need to put in place. This showed that in the vast majority of criteria, the benefice has policy and practice fully in place. There are a few small tweaks which need to be addressed in the area of risk assessments and updating our policies which have now been completed.

### **Safer recruitment**

The online system for DBS clearance is now established throughout the benefice. The requirement for DBS renewals has now been changed to every three years (previously five years) so there will be a need for these to take place more frequently going forwards. In addition, there are a few members who will need to renew their DBS in the coming months.

We were recently given further guidance on DBS checks for the All Age Worship team which stated that all members of the team were advised to be DBS checked which is now being completed.

PCC members do not need DBS checks as advised by the Diocese that 'All Trustees of such a charity are eligible for a DBS check, and the Church of England advises that at least 3 members of that PCC are checked. This would normally be 2 churchwardens and the Parish Safeguarding Officer.' We have 1 Church Warden checked, plus the PSO and a few members of PCC are also DBS checked as they volunteer with children's groups.

Currently, there are no other volunteers who require DBS clearance, but this is always under review.

Thank you to everyone for their willingness to go through this process, your cooperation has been much appreciated.

## **Training**

Thank you to everyone who has spent time completing the required Safeguarding training. Most current PCC members have now undertaken their Basic Awareness training which is completed via a short online module. This basic training needs renewing every three years and new members of the PCC elected at the APCM, will be required to complete this in the near future. The PSO will contact anyone to whom this applies.

The Rector and Curate has completed additional leadership training. The PSO will undertake the updated leadership training in March 2023 as it was three years since doing the old style C2 training.

All volunteers are being reminded to complete the foundations safeguarding training using the online module. I'm pleased to say most volunteers have undertaken the foundations training and some are continued to being encouraged to complete it.

## **Safeguarding concerns and incidents**

No safeguarding concerns have been raised during the year. A written procedure for dealing with allegations/disclosures of abuse is now in place, to provide guidance to any parishioner who needs to report an incident or allegation of abuse. This will be posted on the safeguarded section of the website very shortly.

Rob Bubyer  
Parish Safeguarding Officer  
March 2023