



Diocese of Canterbury
CHANGED LIVES ⇨ CHANGING LIVES



Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures

March 2022

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Authorised by the Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Advisory Panel 14th March 2022

Adopted by the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Finance on 9th April 2022

Adopted by Canterbury Cathedral Chapter on 27th May 2022

Review date March 2024

1. All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed to promoting and supporting safer environments which:

- 1.1. ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse;
- 1.2. work to protect those experiencing domestic abuse;
- 1.3. recognise equality amongst people and within relationships;
- 1.4. refuse to condone any form of abuse;
- 1.5. enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently.

2. We recognise that:

- 2.1. all forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship;
- 2.2. all survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- 2.3. domestic abuse can occur in all communities;
- 2.4. domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency;
- 2.5. domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour;
- 2.6. working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

3. We will respond to domestic abuse:

3.1 In all our activities by –

- 3.1.1 valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse, whilst appreciating the need to ensure a distance is kept between the two and refusing to condone the perpetration or continuation of any form of abuse.

3.2 In our publicity by –

- 3.2.1 raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

3.3 When concerns are raised by –

- 3.3.1 ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help;
- 3.3.2 working with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

3.4 In our care by –

- 3.4.1 ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;
- 3.4.2 identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

4 Advice and Support

- 4.1 If you feel that you or someone you know is in immediate danger then please call the police on 999.
- 4.2 The Diocese of Canterbury Safeguarding Team will provide advice and support for individuals, Parishes and church bodies – [Safeguarding Team contact details are here](#) :
 - 4.2.1 The Safeguarding team will provide advice and support to anyone experiencing or concerned about domestic abuse, for themselves or for others;
 - 4.2.2 All concerns reported to the Diocese in respect of Church officers and domestic abuse will be monitored and recorded by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team;
 - 4.2.3 Support is available to all Parishes in implementing a Domestic Abuse policy and related practice Guidance found in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook (found [here](#));
 - 4.2.4 Training is provided through the Church of England Training Portal, with online Domestic Abuse training ([found here](#)) for those in leadership, safeguarding and pastoral positions in the Diocese and Parishes;
 - 4.2.5 The Diocese will work in partnership with specialist agencies including Police, Local Authorities, Community Safety

Partnerships to support victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse.

- 4.2.6 The Bishop of Dover seeks to support the spouse and partners of clergy whose relationships have broken down irretrievably and are separating. They are offered by invitation, contact with and the support of a Bishop's Visitor. This offer is facilitated by the Bishop's Chaplain. Whilst there is no assumption that domestic abuse will have been a contributory factor in the break-up of the relationship, Bishop's Visitors will be cognisant of this policy and will respond appropriate to any disclosures of abuse.

5 Independent Advice and Support

- 5.1 The Diocesan Safeguarding team are available to provide independent unbiased sensitive and discrete advice and guidance. However, the Diocese of Canterbury supports and encourages anyone who may be experiencing, or are concerned about domestic abuse for themselves or others, to seek advice and support completely independent of the Diocese if they would prefer to speak with a specialist advisor outside of the Church.
- 5.2 We commend the recognised specialist support services to anyone seeking independent support or advice and advise. A directory of local services for Kent can be found [here](#) or you can contact Victim support on 0808 168 9111.

The Diocese of Canterbury is committed to reviewing our policy and procedures regularly.