



Churchwarden – Safeguarding Responsibilities

Churchwardens are the senior lay representatives of the parish. The role of the churchwarden is extremely varied but generally involves management, maintenance and mission in accordance with the Churchwardens Measure 2001¹ and the Canons of the Church of England (see in particular Canon E1²). They are the foremost in representing the laity and in co-operating with the incumbent, and they have a duty to maintain order and decency in the church and churchyard, particularly during the times of divine service. In co-operation with the incumbent, churchwardens are generally responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the parish.

In relation to safeguarding, the churchwardens work with the incumbent, PCC and parish safeguarding officer to:

- Ensure that in the period of a vacancy (during an interregnum), that the incumbent's safeguarding roles and responsibilities are fulfilled, in consultation with the PCC, parish safeguarding officer and the area dean;
- Pay attention to the specific needs of children and vulnerable adults when undertaking health and safety inspections and risk assessment;
- Ensure that risk assessments are carried out before new activities are undertaken;
- Ensure that all parish activities with children and vulnerable adults are adequately supervised and insured;
- Ensure that the parish has procedures for responding to complaints⁵¹ and grievances;
- Answer questions regarding safeguarding as they arise in the archdeacon's visitations, and respond to any specific safeguarding advice, which may be given from the archdeacon.

Churchwardens maybe disqualified or suspended from office if they are placed on a barred list or are arrested for certain offences³.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/2001/1/contents>

² See Canon E1 para 4 – Churchwardens are charged with active participation in the Church's mission – "...use their best endeavours by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote peace and unity among them"

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukcm/2016/1/section/2>