

Appendix 3

Technical Definition

Who is a 'vulnerable' adult?

Technically, a vulnerable adult is any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or any other disability, age, illness or any other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to care for him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. Practically, people may fall into a wider group of vulnerability and require sensitivity

What is mistreatment, abuse or harm?

Spiritual aspects of abuse

Churches need to be sensitive so that they do not, in their pastoral care, attempt to 'force' religious values or ideals onto people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices. (See Diocese of Bristol | Safeguarding adults in Appendix 4)

Physical Abuse

The ill-treatment of an adult, which may or may not cause physical injury, is regarded as physical abuse.

Emotional or psychological abuse.

The use of threats or fear or the power of the carer's or any other adult's position to negate the vulnerable person's independent wishes.

Financial or legal abuse

The wilful extortion or manipulation of the vulnerable person's legal or civil rights must be construed as abuse.

Neglect

Neglectful behaviour is any pattern of activity by another person, which seriously impairs an individual.

Sexual abuse

A sexual act carried out without the informed consent of the other individual is abuse.

Implementing the Policy

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.

Reporting Mistreatment

The government guidance "No Secrets" places on local authorities the responsibility to provide a structure for the investigation of harm to vulnerable people. Any initial report should be given to the nominated person in the

church who will seek advice from the appropriate officer. In an emergency situation, serious concerns are referred to the designated person in the Adult Services Department (or similar) of the local authority.