

**The Independent
Safeguarding Review: lessons
learnt from events in the
parishes of Stowe and Maids
Moreton, 2012-2019**

Report for Diocese of Oxford

**Dr Adi Cooper, OBE
Independent Safeguarding Consultant**

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report was commissioned to review the circumstances highlighted by the trial and conviction of Ben Field and identify learning to improve the safeguarding of potentially vulnerable adults attending church. This report is based on records provided by the Diocese and interviews undertaken by the independent reviewer between September and December 2019. The independent reviewer found that significant improvements had already been made in safeguarding policy and practice; however, there are several areas where further improvement is advisable. Although the events in the Parishes of Stowe and Maids Moreton were unusual, there is learning from them that can inform improvement in safeguarding policy and practice.
- 1.2. The abuse and murder of Peter Farquhar and abuse of Anne Moore-Martin by Ben Field had unique characteristics, there are aspects that apply to other older people who could become vulnerable to harm. Both Peter Farquhar's and Anne Moore-Martin's needs for emotional intimacy meant that they were vulnerable to grooming and exploitation. The need for emotional intimacy is a basic human need and this report highlights that all adults have the potential to be made vulnerable in this way.
- 1.3. The closed culture of the Stowe Church in general, including attitudes towards homosexuality¹, meant that the Peter Farquhar's homosexuality and the relationship between Peter Farquhar and Ben Field was a 'well-known secret'. The wider policies of the Church of England regarding homosexual practice and approach to sexuality and relationships put Peter Farquhar at risk and vulnerable to exploitation. A culture which supported openness and transparency would have better safeguarded Peter Farquhar. Whilst people continue to feel forced to hide or lie about their sexuality, they can become vulnerable to exploitation, as was Peter Farquhar.
- 1.4. Peter Farquhar's fears were expressed and responded to within a particularly unhelpful theological paradigm. Responding in this way may have provided some comfort but did not help Peter manage what was an artificially created mental illness. It indicates the extent to which members of Stowe Parish Church had been deceived, as they did not suspect any other explanation for Peter's mental distress and physical illness than the one provided by Ben Field.
- 1.5. The case review explores issues about recruitment of volunteers as well as potential Ordinands. Ben Field pursued a 'scam', pretending to be interested in the church and ministry, and deceiving and effectively grooming the Stowe Vicar and congregation by becoming PCC Secretary and Deputy Church Warden. The learning regarding safer recruitment of volunteers has already been incorporated into the current national guidance in this area – from the Church of England as well as the Charity Commissioners.
- 1.6. The lessons from the harm done by Ben Field presents a challenge for the Church regarding specific themes: the abuse of trust in a religious paradigm, attitudes towards sex and sexuality, and safe recruitment both of clergy and volunteers.
- 1.7. The case review has benefitted from hindsight and its purpose is to extract the learning so that improvements can be made. No system or processes can completely eliminate all risk, however risks can be reduced, mitigated and managed. The learning from the case review provides guidance on where developments can be effective to reduce risks for the future.

¹ 'Homosexual' and homosexuality' are the terms used throughout this report as this language is used by the Church. Some interviewees used the term 'gay' as well when talking about Peter Farquhar, as would members of the 'gay' community.

- 1.8. The case review makes 13 recommendations for improving safeguarding awareness and prevention as well as supporting a shift to a more open culture within the Church around safeguarding in all its complexity. The learning from this case review should be promoted to illustrate the complexities of human behaviours, particularly regarding religion, age and sexuality. There have been improvements in the discernment and ordination process since Ben Field went through the processes; however, further improvements in screening applicants can be made. Finally, there is an opportunity to shift the learning culture in the church through using this review as a case study to explore very sensitive areas for safeguarding adults and achieve change to make the church a safer place for all.

2. Introduction and purpose of the review

- 2.1. This report has been commissioned by the Diocese of Oxford regarding the case of Ben Field, who was convicted and sentenced in October 2019 for murdering Peter Farquhar and committing significant fraud against him and a neighbour, Anne Moore-Martin. Peter Farquhar had been an active member of Stowe Church and Ben Field became the Parish Secretary and a Deputy Church Warden partly due to Peter Farquhar's patronage (see pictures below). The impact and the circumstances of this case for the Parish and the Diocese has prompted significant reflection and review regarding the involvement of the Church of England, in terms of safeguarding church members who become vulnerable, as well as identifying potential abusers of vulnerable members of the congregation. Consequently, the focus of this independent review is to establish learning from the experiences of Anne Moore-Martin and Peter Farquhar that can inform safeguarding adults' practice in the Diocese and across the Church of England.
- 2.2. The terms of reference for the review were developed to meet the purpose of the review. Although the case of Ben Field is exceptional, the Diocese was determined to learn what further action is required to ensure that potentially vulnerable adults attending church are adequately protected from harm. The purpose of this review is not to reopen the case and it is not an investigation. The review is undertaken in the spirit of a discretionary Safeguarding Adults Review². This means that it aims to identify lessons to be learnt from the case in order to apply them to future cases and inform improvements. These improvements are envisaged to result from the actions taken in response to the review's recommendations. However, this is not a Safeguarding Adults Review, which only the local Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board can commission. The Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board has decided not to undertake a Safeguarding Adults Review in this case and there is a Domestic Homicide Review underway.
- 2.3. Six areas of focus for learning were specified in the terms of reference for this independent review (see Appendix A):

² Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health and Social Care, 2018 para 14.162 & 168 'A Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) must arrange a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) when an adult in its area dies as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult. The SAR should seek to determine what the relevant agencies and individuals involved in the case might have done differently that could have prevented harm or death. This is so that lessons can be learned from the case and those lessons applied to future cases to prevent similar harm occurring again'.

1. identify what improvements may be needed at a Diocesan and Parish level to fully protect adults who become vulnerable;
 2. To provide a high level overview of the support needed at Parish level and assist where possible in helping shape the future support and pastoral care of the Parish, its officers and members;
 3. To review the processes of Discernment and preparation for ordination to ensure that standards for safeguarding are consistent with best practice in selection and appointment;
 4. To consider how the Diocese of Oxford should strengthen its practice when working with volunteers within Church settings and which support the crucial role of volunteering;
 5. To consider the process for the identification and referral of care and support needs alongside any potential risk of harm and abuse;
 6. To identify any changes or developments to national policies and processes which might be recommended to the Parish, Diocese and/or wider Church of England. (in particular, concerning i) information sharing; ii) the discernment and ordination process; and iii) responses to safeguarding).
- 2.4. An independent reviewer was commissioned to undertake this review: Dr Adi Cooper OBE. She has had no previous connection with the Church of England (See Appendix B).
- 2.5. This independent review of practices and responses to the circumstances presented by the Ben Field case identifies key issues and recommendations for further action (see section 7).
- 2.6. Pen Pictures of the three people involved in this case are provided below.

Peter Farquhar was a retired teacher from Stowe School, and a retired academic from Buckingham University, who had written and published four novels. He was a highly intelligent man, who was passionate about English literature and had been a Cambridge University graduate. He was a sociable man with a network of friends and family. He was an active member of Stowe Church and he had strong conservative Christian beliefs. He was homosexual and celibacy was his way of reconciling his beliefs and sexuality. He wanted, and believed he had, an emotionally intimate friendship with Ben Field.

Anne Moore-Martin was a retired headteacher, who was reported to have been a friendly neighbour. She had not married and had no children but was close to her niece. She was a member of the local Catholic church. She fell in love with Ben Field and had a sexual relationship with him.

Both Peter Farquhar and Anne Moore-Martin lived on the same road in the village of Maids Moreton, Buckinghamshire and owned their houses. Both had lived with and looked after their elderly mothers, who had died, so they lived alone. They were both devout Christians.

Ben Field is the son of a Baptist Minister. He was an undergraduate and post-graduate at the University of Buckingham. He had worked in various jobs before becoming a care assistant in a local Nursing Home. He had cared for his sister, who had mental health problems, as a teenager. He defined himself as heterosexual and also had sex with men. In the Court Case he was described as having a Personality Disorder, which:

'included a lack of empathy, a callous lack of concern for the feelings of others, and an incapacity to experience guilt or to profit from experience...a sense of superiority towards

others, the exploitation of others to achieve personal gain, the need to belittle and humiliate others, fixation on fantasies of power and success, intelligence, a need for admiration from others, and a sense of entitlement together with an unwillingness to empathise with the feelings, needs and wishes of others.....very little understanding of (his) own inner world, leading to (his) need to deceive and destroy others.' ³

He groomed and coerced, and emotionally and psychologically abused through 'gas-lighting' both Peter Farquhar and Anne Moore-Martin for considerable financial and material gain, by exploiting their needs for intimacy⁴. He drugged, defrauded and murdered Peter Farquhar. He sexually exploited and defrauded Anne Moore-Martin.

- 2.7. There has been considerable media coverage of the Court case, which has highlighted the complex nature of the evidence that was required in order to convict and to identify the abuse perpetrated by Ben Field. Without diligent police work and an element of luck, Ben Field's abuse could have gone unrecognised for even longer. Media reports have also provided insights into the strengths and vulnerabilities of the victims as well as the behaviour of the abuser.

3. The process of the review

- 3.1. Following the development of the terms of reference for this review, the independent reviewer met with Diocese representatives in September 2019 to agree the process for undertaking the review. The methodology included reading relevant documents and speaking with several identified individuals. Two files containing available confidential records and papers relating to the review were made available at the Diocese offices, including correspondence regarding allegations and concerns raised about the conduct of Ben Field and the welfare of parishioners⁵. These also contained papers regarding his application to the Bishop's Advisory Panel to be considered for Ordination. People identified as having useful experiences and insights and who had been involved in the case were asked if they would agree to be interviewed in person or by telephone. Most of the key individuals identified at the start of the process have been contacted via the Diocese, Archdeacon or current Stowe Vicar and have been interviewed in person or by telephone.
- 3.2. The independent reviewer also attended a Sunday service at Stowe Church so that parishioners and Parish Officers could meet with and talk to her. This took place in December 2019. All those interviewed or spoken with have been assured that their contributions to this process would remain confidential, so they have not been named in the report.
- 3.3. A chronology has been compiled from the range of evidence, including information from the interviews, referring to significant events relevant to the purpose of the review. The chronology starts in 2011 with Peter Farquhar and Ben Field meeting and continues to the

³ Sentencing comments from the Trial of Ben Field, 2019

⁴ See Appendix D for brief explanations of the terms 'grooming' and 'gas lighting'

⁵ The reviewer has not had access to the papers from the police investigation, which included the personal diaries for Ben Field and Peter Farquhar. The sources from the chronology are detailed in Appendix C.

sentencing of Ben Field for the murder of Peter Farquhar in October 2019 (see Appendix C). It includes a narrative about Anne Moore-Martin because the exposure of Ben Field's abuse of Anne Moore-Martin led to discovery of his harm and murder of Peter Farquhar.

- 3.4. The reviewer was asked to consider whether the safeguarding responses were undertaken in accordance with recognised good practice and were compliant with Diocesan and/or Church of England and statutory policy and legislation. A comprehensive internal review was undertaken July 2017, and this was scrutinised by the external reviewer. It emphasised that actions taken to mitigate risks and protect potential vulnerable people need to be taken promptly and tailored to local circumstances. These need to be protective, reactive to need and conducted in liaison with partners, e.g. police, social services. The internal review made recommendations that the Diocese has subsequently implemented to increase the capacity and capability of its safeguarding services. The Diocese and Church of England safeguarding policies and processes that were revised, improved and introduced in 2017/18 continue to support and prompt appropriate safeguarding actions to be taken. The independent reviewer did not repeat the work that had already been undertaken.

4. Summary of the chronology

- 4.1. This section presents a summary of the chronology capturing the key milestones in the lives of the Peter Farquhar, Anne Moore-Martin and Ben Field from 2011-2019. For more details see Appendix C.
- 4.2. Peter Farquhar and Ben Field met in 2011 at the University of Buckingham. They met again in 2012, went on holiday together in 2013 and developed a strong friendship. Ben Field moved into Peter Farquhar's house in November 2012 as a lodger whilst he was working at a local Nursing Home. They had a 'betrothal ceremony' in March 2014 to validate their relationship, after Ben Field 'proposed' to Peter Farquhar. Peter Farquhar presented Ben Field as his protegee to the Stowe Church congregation and Ben Field pretended he was interested in the Church. He took on volunteer roles in Stowe Parish in 2013 as Secretary and Deputy Church Warden.
- 4.3. In 2014 Peter Farquhar retired from the University of Buckingham and over time he became socially isolated. Ben Field manipulated Peter Farquhar into thinking that he was in a relationship with him, whilst Ben Field was also having relationships with women. Ben Field began to 'gaslight' Peter Farquhar and influenced him to amend his will in November 2014. These changes provided Ben Field with rights to live in Peter's house after his death and gave Ben a cash sum of £15,000, if Ben lived with Peter for 24 months prior to his death.
- 4.4. In December 2014 Martyn Smith, a friend of Ben Field and also a lodger with Peter Farquhar, moved out of the house. In January 2015, Ben Field started drugging Peter Farquhar so that he appeared confused and mentally unwell, experienced hallucinations and falls. The 'gaslighting' continued to cause Peter Farquhar confusion. Ben Field presented Peter Farquhar's condition as due to dementia and/or alcohol consumption. Doctors investigated Peter Farquhar's ill health. However, tests done through a Memory Clinic found no evidence of dementia. Ben Field continued to suggest that Peter Farquhar had an obscure form of undiagnosable dementia or that his symptoms were the result of alcoholism. In April and May 2015 Peter Farquhar continued to hallucinate, fall and injure

himself. He was taken to hospital on several occasions, including following an alleged drug overdose, which he denied.

- 4.5. In June 2015 Ben Field began to write love letters and poems to Anne Moore-Martin, who he had met as a neighbour of Peter Farquhar's in November 2014. This was part of a 'grooming' process.
- 4.6. By the end of July 2015 Peter Farquhar was very unwell and distressed by what he was experiencing. He was regularly falling, sleeping 16 hours a day and hallucinating. He was initially diagnosed with a urinary tract infection but continued to be very ill and was experiencing psychotic episodes. In August 2015 he told fellow parishioners and the Stowe Vicar that there was 'evil' in the house and they came to pray with him as well as provide pastoral care. At his book launch in August he was hallucinating 'shards of light that were attacking him' and appeared ill. Martyn Smith had moved back into his house to help Ben Field care for him.
- 4.7. Peter Farquhar was influenced by Ben Field to change his will for a second time in September 2015, removing the time condition clause and increasing the cash sum payment to £20,000. Peter Farquhar told the Stowe Vicar that he appeared to have struck Ben Field possibly because he had been drinking too much. In September and October 2015 there were a further series of falls, an apparent drug overdose, an apparent suicide attempt and admission to hospital. On October 8th Peter Farquhar went into a Nursing Home for a few days respite and recovered considerably. It is clear in hindsight that this recovery was because Ben Field was no longer administering drugs to him. Martyn Smith moved out of Peter Farquhar's house and Ben Field moved in with Anne Moore-Martin.
- 4.8. When Peter Farquhar returned home all the alcohol was locked away and he appeared to be much better as Ben Field had not been drugging him. On October 25th Peter Farquhar went to Stowe Church to thank people for their support. Ben Field had gone away for the weekend and Martyn Smith went to stay with Peter Farquhar overnight, leaving a bottle of whisky behind. This was found by Peter Farquhar's cleaner alongside his dead body on Monday. The Coroner said that the cause of death was alcohol toxicity. The funeral was held in November 2015, but the cause of Peter Farquhar's death was not made public due to the wishes of the family. Ben Field benefitted from Peter Farquhar's will, receiving £142,000 when the house was sold in 2016.
- 4.9. From April 2016 Ben Field started staying overnight with Anne Moore-Martin, who had fallen in love with him. He pretended that he was in a loving relationship with her but was isolating her by preventing her from seeing her family and friends. He was 'gas lighting' her by manipulating her religious beliefs. For example, he wrote religious messages on her mirrors that she believed were from God. This activity aimed to influence Anne Moore-Martin to give him money and change her will in his favour. He also talked to her about suicide and dying. During 2016, Anne Moore-Martin gave Ben Field £4,400 for a car and cashed her bonds to provide £26,700 for him to allegedly buy a dialysis machine for his brother. She was repeatedly being influenced to change her will from benefitting her niece to benefitting Ben Field. This was not successful in October 2016 as the solicitor consulted had also been involved in Peter Farquhar's will changes and was suspicious. However, Anne-Moore-Martin did change her will in favour of Ben Field in December 2016.
- 4.10. From mid- 2015 Ben Field pursued an interest in the priesthood, discussing this initially with the Stowe Vicar. In 2016 Ben Field shadowed a Vicar in another Parish for a couple of days (who was sceptical about his interest in the ministry and his academic background). Ben Field was confirmed in November 2015 at Stowe Church. During April to October 2016 he met several times with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands as part of the

application process. Between June and September 2016 Ben Field also met with a Spiritual Adviser to discuss his interest in becoming ordained, which was also part of the discernment process. In January 2017 the Spiritual Adviser raised serious concerns with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands about Ben Field, but a second opinion was not sought. The references for Ben Field were positive and all the relevant papers were collated by the Diocesan Director of Ordinands for submission by 6th February for presentation to the next Bishops Advisory Panel on 20th March. This interest in the Church was a scam: during his trial it became clear that Ben Field saw ordination as a route to being able to harm more people.

- 4.11. In February 2017 Anne Moore-Martin was admitted to hospital following a seizure. She had spoken to a friend about a 'white powder' that she had been given by Ben Field. The friend was concerned about this incident, as she was about Anne Moore-Martin's relationship with a much younger man and the change to Anne Moore-Martin's will in favour of Ben Field. This friend raised a safeguarding concern, and her Catholic priest contacted Buckinghamshire Social Services. Anne Moore-Martin spoke to her niece about the religious mirror writing, the niece also found out about the changes in the will and she alerted Thames Valley Police (TVP).
- 4.12. Ben Field was prevented from seeing Anne Moore-Martin in the Hospital and the TVP started investigating the allegations regarding Anne Moore-Martin. Ben Field was arrested in March 2017. His connections with Peter Farquhar and concerns about the circumstances of his death led to Peter Farquhar's body being exhumed in May 2017 and a second post-mortem taking place. This provided evidence that Peter Farquhar had been drugged. The trial of Ben Field and Martyn Smith began on 1st May 2019. Ben Field was found guilty of murdering Peter Farquhar, defrauding both Peter Farquhar and Anne Moore-Martin, and was sentenced on 18th October 2019. Martyn Smith was acquitted.

5. Key findings

- 5.1. The analysis of evidence is presented in the following sections, which relate to the six areas for learning in the Terms of Reference (see Appendix A or p.3 above). Section One considers the challenges of safeguarding prevention and protection of people who become vulnerable; Section Two covers Parish level support and pastoral care needs; Section Three reviews the discernment and application for ordination process; Section Four covers working with volunteers at Parish and Diocese levels; Section Five looks at identification of care and support needs and potential risks of harm and abuse; and Section Six looks at implications for national policies and processes including i) information sharing; ii) the discernment and ordination process; and iii) responses to safeguarding.

Section One: challenges of safeguarding prevention and protection people who become vulnerable

- 5.2. This section looks at the factors that contribute to older people becoming vulnerable and the learning implications for safeguarding awareness and prevention.
- 5.3. The circumstances of the Stowe Parish have some unique features: as a 'gathered church' it lacks a locality focus; the parishioners attend from a broad geographic area, including

former staff from Stowe School. It has close associations with the Stowe School, being situated in its grounds, and shared a Vicar with the school during much of the time under review. The Stowe Church has a strong identity: the Parish is seen as a 'closed' or 'close knit community'; it is isolated from other church communities as it is not part of a group of Parishes; and it has an evangelical theology and conservative culture, which includes 'traditional' views regarding homosexuality and homosexual practice. These dynamics also generated a clear sense of internal trust which was articulated when Ben Field was first arrested as a collective denial of any allegations i.e. 'how can one of us do that?'

- 5.4. Like many other rural congregations, the demographic profile of the Parish is older and aging. In this context there is a higher likelihood of people becoming vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, for example vulnerability to financial scamming increases with age, social isolation and loneliness⁶. Although both Peter Farquhar and Anne Moore-Martin were retired, they were very able, mentally and physically, and led active lives when they first met Ben Field. They became vulnerable due to his grooming activities and abuse. Their specific vulnerability was the fundamental human need for emotional intimacy, connected with feelings of loneliness, which Ben Field was able to exploit for financial gain. Anne Moore-Martin was reported to be distraught when she realised that she had been deceived by Ben Field and this may have been aggravated by her religious beliefs and his manipulation of these to take advantage of her.
- 5.5. Peter Farquhar's vulnerability was further heightened by the combination of his sexuality and religious beliefs; his sexual orientation was known but not acknowledged by most people who knew him. He struggled to reconcile his own conservative Christian beliefs with his sexual orientation. According to his brother 'he felt these two things did not go together entirely'⁷. He was also of a generation with experience of living in a society where homosexuality was illegal and criminalised for many years. He looked for support regarding his homosexuality and Christian faith from people who had a different view than the Stowe parishioners, for example Rev F, who conducted his 'betrothal ceremony' to Ben Field. Rev F had questioned Ben Field about his commitment to an older man at that time, which was appropriate for him to do, given the significance of the event he was officiating. Rev F reported that Ben Field's response was believable, and he had no doubts about the authenticity of their relationship at that stage⁸.
- 5.6. Peter Farquhar and Ben Field agreed to keep their relationship secret, which was understandable in the context of the attitudes of many of the Stowe Church parishioners to homosexuality as well as Peter Farquhar's own religious views. He had chosen to be an active member of a Parish that held very conservative views on homosexuality, which has had in hindsight a negative impact on Peter Farquhar. In Stowe Church, homosexuality and homosexual practice were generally perceived as deviant and wrong, so he could not be honest about his emotional relationship with Ben Field. However, his novels explored homosexual themes and he had talked about dilemmas regarding sexuality in a Stowe Bible Study group⁹. Homophobic attitudes (unconscious or conscious, personal or institutional) in the Stowe Church Parish meant that Peter Farquhar's sexual orientation was a 'well-known secret' that was not publicly acknowledged. The relationship between Peter Farquhar and

⁶ Lee, S. et al (2017), 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Financial Scamming' in Cooper, A. & White, E. *Safeguarding Adults Under the Care Act 2014: Understanding Good Practice*, Jessica Kingsley Publications, London

⁷ Statement in Court

⁸ Interview with Rev F.

⁹ Conversations with Stowe parishioners

Ben Field was not spoken about by Parish members and it was described and understood that Ben Field was Peter Farquhar's lodger.

- 5.7. 'Secrecy' is a pervasive negative factor in safeguarding adults, not least because of the emotional impact of abuse on victims, and a 'culture of secrecy' has been identified as a significant inhibiting factor in safeguarding people in Church communities¹⁰. Certainly, it was a factor in these circumstances. Raising concerns about safeguarding is not easy in this context, particularly if there is a culture of secrecy and non-disclosure generally regarding homosexuality i.e. 'don't ask don't tell'. A cultural change is required to enable people to express their concerns in a way that is non-judgemental to counteract this culture of secrecy. This would support improvement in safeguarding adults' practice in terms of prevention as well as protection. When interviewees were asked whether they may have been more critical and challenging, in a supportive way, had Peter Farquhar been heterosexual and Ben Field been female, most people spoken with said they would have taken more interest, particularly when there were gifts and large sums of money involved. They would have been more curious and suspicious (as were Anne Moore-Martin's friends and relatives), asking for example 'are you sure this is a healthy relationship (considering the age gap)? The independent reviewer's view is that this 'common sense' response was suspended towards Peter Farquhar because of attitudes that parishioners held towards homosexuality, based on a conservative theological interpretation of the Bible, which meant that his sexuality and the relationship were not questioned, explored or overtly discussed.
- 5.8. A further potential inhibiting factor was Peter Farquhar's own uncritical attitude to his relationship with Ben Field; he wrote to a friend 'this has given me happiness that I have long since never expected to enjoy'.¹¹ In this context he may have defended his unwise decisions to give Ben Field money and a legacy in his will if he had been challenged. Unlike Anne Moore-Martin he also never expressed any explicit concerns about Ben Field. Further, he was hugely respected by other parishioners, and people trusted his judgement. Respect for him and his reputation meant that people were even less likely to question what was happening in his personal life.
- 5.9. There are significant challenges for safeguarding prevention where basic needs not being met expose people to exploitation. Reducing social isolation and vulnerability is a broader community responsibility. This case reinforces the need for maintaining social contact within communities of interest as protective factors, particularly as people age and become house bound. Recognising that older people have needs for emotional intimacy, relationships and to express their sexuality is often not socially acceptable and is a manifestation of the agism that exists with society¹². More open acknowledgement of these needs would reduce the potential for predators to take advantage and use this as a means to abuse and defraud older people.
- 5.10. The recommendation from a previous review, 'that the Church must promote an open and accepting culture in which everyone, regardless of their sexuality or their views about homosexuality, is clear about their responsibilities towards those who might be

¹⁰ Wilson, A & Harper, R. (2019) 'A fresh approach to safeguarding adults in the church', DLT

¹¹ Quoted in BBC Radio Five Live, documentary 'Killer in the congregation 22nd December 2019 released 18th December 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07rdl95>

¹² See Bildtgaard, T., Oberg, P. (2017) *Intimacy and Ageing: New Relationships in Later Life*. Bristol, The Policy Press.

abused or who might want to raise concerns about abuse'¹³ is reinforced by this review. Negative attitudes towards homosexuality and homosexual practice in the Church of England reinforce internalised homophobia. An area for applying learning from this case review would be to ask, 'How many other older men and women in similar positions to Peter Farquhar may be vulnerable to exploitation?' There is an issue here for the wider church to consider how it offers support to its lesbian and gay members, not to 'cure' and 'heal' them as this would be a deeply homophobic response. Establishing a LGBTI+ chaplaincy is a positive step in this context.¹⁴ However, the institutional Church of England faces challenges to resolve its own positioning on this, before it can effectively support any individuals with their expressed tensions between sexuality and religious beliefs. This case review calls for a concerted effort to be made to reduce the stigma of homosexuality within the wider Church of England communion, so that it can provide a safer place for lesbians and gay men to worship, as is its intent¹⁵.

- 5.11. The issue of how to explore issues of personal relationships and sexuality is a complex area, particularly given current contradictory expectations from the Church of England regarding homosexuality and heterosexuality, which may lead people to lie about the reality of their sexual lives. The current position taken by the Church of England, continuing to insist that sex is for married couples only and that any other partnership has to be a sexually abstinent friendship¹⁶, is not conducive to disclosure, particularly from young people, as well as exposing people to risk, as discussed in section 1 above. This needs to change and the Church should consider how to make it possible for people to be honest about their relationships, as well as being a safe place for lesbians and gay men.
- 5.12. Secondly, there are challenges for parish officers and leaders when having difficult conversations about personal matters with other parishioners, where there might be safeguarding concerns. Proactive identification that someone may be struggling, and involvement of external agencies, even for advice, can be a difficult step to take by people who may not feel skilled and knowledgeable about this area. Safeguarding awareness training is essential, but it needs to be more than familiarity with identifying the signs and symptoms of abuse. Developing the knowledge and skills necessary to build trust and have difficult conversations about potential grooming or scamming might have been helpful in this case. However, these require more than didactic training. A developmental approach is necessary, that acknowledges the complexities of this task and role, and this should be considered for the future.
- 5.13. There is a fine line between respectful curiosity and unhelpful gossip. There is a particular challenge for the Church community concerning not just how to recognise and identify potential predators within its local community, but then what to say that will be heard without the person raising it being criticised. The negative perception of 'gossip' in evangelical settings, as spiritual wrongdoing, may inhibit concerns being expressed. In the context of safeguarding adults, disclosing concerns as an outcome of respectful curiosity

¹³ Moira Gibb et al, (2017) The Independent Peter Ball Review, An abuse of faith, Church of England para 5.7.3 <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/report-of-the-peter-ball-review-210617.pdf>

¹⁴ See <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/lgbti-chaplaincy-service/>

¹⁵ Church of England, House of Bishops, (2017) 'Promoting a Safer Church policy, the Church of England's policy for Children, young people and adults, p.5 ,<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/cofe-policy-statement.pdf>

and caring interest, speaking up for someone who is experiencing harm or abuse, should be encouraged.

- 5.14. Whilst the murder of Peter Farquhar by Ben Field was an extremely unusual event, the grooming and abuse of vulnerable elderly people and rural elderly congregations is not so unusual in the Church of England¹⁷ and there are lessons from this case review that can be applied more broadly. The role of Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) has been supported and enhanced and there is a better understanding of the Church of England's responsibilities around safeguarding adults, since the period under review¹⁸. This could be further enhanced through a developmental learning approach that developed core skills such as holding difficult conversations, offering feedback and appreciative inquiry. Developing the knowledge and skills of PSOs and other Church leaders in this area would be a helpful way forward. This particular case review described, for example in a '7 minute briefing'¹⁹, could be used as a prompt for discussion between PSOs with the Diocese Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) to consider the implications for local church communities. This model of learning could be promoted more widely to enhance safeguarding knowledge and understanding at a national level within the Church of England.

Section Two: Parish level support

- 5.15. This section addresses issues that have emerged from the experiences at Stowe Parish where people who met Ben Field, including the incumbent Vicar, Parish officers and parishioners, were 'groomed'²⁰ insofar as they believed in his feigned interest in the Church and his stated desire to become a priest. Ben Field was convincing; because of his Baptist upbringing, he knew what to say even if he didn't believe in it. Some Stowe parishioners were not taken in, but instead of raising their concerns about his insincerity (for example, in his sermons), their Christian beliefs led to them adopting a 'seeing the best in everyone' mentality and remain silent. They also did not want their concerns interpreted by others in power as negative 'gossip'.
- 5.16. Some parishioners felt that they were not kept informed of what was going on after Ben Field was arrested. In this case it was aggravated by a prolonged period of uncertainty, during the police investigation, including the exhumation of Peter Farquhar's remains, and the trial of Ben Field. Individuals respond differently to crises, loss and shock. In the aftermath of the arrest of Ben Field there were a range of emotional responses including denial, guilt, anger, grief and feeling betrayed. Exacerbating factors were limitations on information-sharing during the police investigations and other issues affecting the clerical leadership at Stowe Church. Media interest in the case also was unhelpful; parishioners did not know what to say or not say when they were approached.

¹⁷ Interviewees provided other examples of individuals and communities being deceived, abused and defrauded in Church of England settings.

¹⁸ Evidenced by the review and implementation of policies, procedures and the national training programme as well as the ongoing increasing level of concerns about adults reported to different Dioceses as described by interviewees. Church of England, House of Bishops, 2017, Promoting a Safer Church; Church of England, House of Bishops (2019), Practice Guidance, Safeguarding Training and Development <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Safeguarding%20Training%20%20Development%202019%20Final%20version.pdf>

¹⁹ See Appendix E 7 minute briefing

²⁰ See Appendix D for definition of 'grooming'

- 5.17. The support that has been offered through the appointment of an interim Vicar at Stowe has been welcomed. She appears to have been effective in building trust, providing pastoral care and enabling Parish officers and parishioners to work through the range of impacts that this case has had on them as individuals and as a community. They have also been supported by the Archdeacon who has been visible in the Parish at key times; his role was appreciated as providing clear communication and reassurance. The provision of professional support for those particularly affected has been offered and appropriately provided when it had been requested.
- 5.18. The learning from this experience is that any support offered and provided should be sensitively targeted to the needs of individuals, at the appropriate time, when it can be most effective. The relationship between Diocese and Parish can become strained under pressures such as this, so it is essential that any safeguarding activity, protection and support offer addresses the needs of the Parish clergy, officers, parishioners and others affected, as well as Diocese employees. Dealing with traumatic experiences is a process, not an event; this goes through different phases, can be unpredictable, varies according to individuals and will change over time. Any offer and provision of support needs to be made recurrently, as well as flexibly, according to personal and community needs. The Diocese's duty of care to a Parish needs to be clear and transparent.
- 5.19. Given the relationship between the Parish and Diocese, which included some distrust of Church hierarchy, the importance of the role of senior clergy should be emphasised. Leadership through visits to the Parish by the Archdeacon and/or Bishop can be helpful in providing reassurance in distressing times, modelling positive behaviours and providing clear communication.
- 5.20. A further learning point arises from reflecting on the support that the incumbent Vicar had when she was dealing with a number of challenges at Stowe, both before and after Peter Farquhar's death. This case review illustrates how priests are also vulnerable and can be victims themselves of grooming and abuse. Parish priests are not therapists. However, a focus on developing resilience and self-care should be considered in their training as well as reviewing the provision of mentoring and peer support to maintain the wellbeing of these clergy. This learning can be applied across to licenced ministers and church officers to ensure that the support offer is appropriate, and they are encouraged to make use of it.

Section 3 Processes for Discernment and preparation for Ordination

- 5.21. This section reviews the process for Discernment and preparation for Ordination in the context of Ben Field's interest in becoming a priest. The broader context for this experience is the general desire and ambition in the Church of England to recruit and train suitable candidates, as well as recognise that applicants will have a range of skills and attributes as well as weaknesses or areas for development. A key aspect of Ben Field's deception was his pretence to be interested in church matters in general, and specifically in undertaking the ordination process to become a priest. He maintained this pretence for several years, going through various processes on the pathway towards being considered for training for ordination. During these processes he came across as an unusual candidate but was able to impress people, drawing on his academic skills and knowledge as well as his Baptist background.

- 5.22. The papers prepared about and by Ben Field for the Bishops Advisory Panel (BAP) in March 2017 illustrate his ability to deceive others. The references are glowing, particularly regarding his roles in the Parish, his academic abilities and faith, as well as his role as carer: he is described in the papers as 'a very strong candidate'. There are some cautious remarks about his application in the Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) report, regarding aspects of his personality like his introversion, as well as the extent of his vocation. These were expected to be picked up through the Panel process.
- 5.23. In hindsight, missed opportunities can be identified when concerns were raised during the process that could have triggered greater challenge of his application. At that time the systems in place did not require rigorous communication between people involved in providing psychological support or supervising applicants on placement. For example, Ben Field appears to have exaggerated his work and academic experiences when he went on a placement. It is unclear whether these issues were pursued or not. However, in themselves these inconsistencies were not 'show-stoppers' but pieces of information that, if triangulated, may have led to further probing.
- 5.24. A serious concern raised by the Spiritual Director about Ben Field being 'psychopathic' was not formally reported. This concern had arisen from sessions with the Spiritual Director, which were 'confidential' in terms of the processes that existed at that time. The Spiritual Director felt that concerns were such that he breached this confidentiality to raise his concerns with the DDO after the sessions had finished. Subsequently, the DDO consulted peers informally regarding these concerns as well as the Selection Secretaries who advise the DDOs. The situation was also used as a case study at a training day in January 2017. The peers who were consulted minimised the concerns on the basis that the referrer, who was a psychotherapist, was considered to be unqualified to make this professional judgement/diagnosis and a second opinion was not sought. There was some reflection that Ben Field's attitudes and behaviours might indicate autism or autistic traits, but this was not pursued in terms of a formal psychological assessment, as it was considered that this would be recommended and undertaken prior to any training commencement.
- 5.25. Ben Field did not disclose details of his multiple personal and sexual relationships when his personal relationships were explored as part of the assessment process. He told the DDO that he was single when she probed about his sexuality and personal relationships and he presented a credible story of being single. He refused to discuss with the Stowe Church Vicar some concerns that had been raised by a parishioner about something she had been told about his sexual behaviour, when on holiday, because it was 'personal'. The parishioner had tried to 'whistle blow' this to the Vicar. Disclosure about personal relationships is considered relevant for the role he was applying for and so his resistance to engage in these conversations was worrying. In hindsight, this was a potential warning sign, but at the time it was considered relatively immaterial. The references for Ben Field from the Parish were positive. Concerns that some parishioners had about him were not communicated to the referees, and therefore to the DDO. (See the above section 1 regarding need for openness and confidence to report safeguarding concerns).
- 5.26. An internal review of the preparation for the Ordination process regarding Ben Field was undertaken by two DDO peers in July 2017. It exonerated the original DDO's practice and judgement, as according to the policies and procedures at the time, she had followed them correctly. The DDO has subsequently emphasised that, within the BAP papers, there were clear messages in the report that raised some concerns about Ben Field's application

for the panel to consider. However, these messages are coded for those familiar with these processes. A lay reader may not have picked up these messages within the report.

- 5.27. Following the Ben Field case, there have been improvements and lessons applied. Changes have been made to the discernment process: firstly, there is a more formal referring and reporting mechanism in the Diocese when someone preparing for this process is considered to require a psychological assessment or therapeutic support. Secondly, there is improved communication between the DDO and DSA regarding candidates for Ordination. Thirdly there is now a 'traffic lights interview' with applicants, to look at areas of weakness and development as part of the discernment process (which can trigger the referral for psychological assessment). Applicants for Ordination in the Diocese are referred for psychological assessments and therapy if there are indications that these would be useful. However, the independent reviewer was informed that this process is pursued by the Oxford Diocese and not a national policy.
- 5.28. Fitness to practise in any area of work requires relevant screening and assessment processes to be undertaken as a duty of care to those receiving services. Over the last few years, safeguarding children and adults has become a clearer priority for the Church of England and so standards for safeguarding have been reviewed in this area, as qualified clergy are people in positions of trust. The discernment and Ordination processes do provide a review of an applicants' competencies and personal attributes and have criteria and thresholds for assessing whether someone has the ability and aptitude for the role²¹. The learning from this case review calls for increased and consistent rigour in one aspect of the process, namely the psychological assessment of all candidates put forward for ordination.
- 5.29. There are factors identified in this review, such as the recruitment needs of the Church that may influence professional judgement and decision making on applicants for ordination. There is a Christian version of the 'rule of optimism'²² that means that people want to see 'the best' in others, and there is a danger that this overrides more considered decision-making. However, the learning from this review is that tighter screening early on in a recruitment process (such as psychological testing) would help screen out inappropriate applicants in the discernment and Ordination processes.
- 5.30. Following this case, the Diocese should consider researching, selecting and using the most appropriate validated psychometric tool for psychological testing of all candidates for the discernment process. The current practice in this Diocese of referring candidates when there are concerns risks accusations of discriminatory practice and missing people who appear capable and competent. Further, the Diocese should advocate for this practice to be implemented nationally in the Church of England.
- 5.31. Additionally, the Church of England/Diocese should consider how to increase the transparency of the process so that relevant information about applicants can be obtained when assessing suitability for Ordination. One example cited was to publish the names of people recommended to be trained for ministry so that the process is more transparent and public. This allows for concerns to be raised regarding suitability for Ordination by people outside the selection process.

²¹ Church of England, House of Bishops, (2017) 'Promoting a Safer Church policy, the Church of England's policy for Children, young people and adults, <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/cofe-policy-statement.pdf>, suite of resources to support the policy on website, <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance>

²² See Appendix D 'rule of optimism'

- 5.32. The Church needs to be rigorous in addressing its screening and assessment of people taking up roles within the Church. Evidence presented within the trial shows that Ben Field believed the Church to be a relatively easy target. To be the safest it can possibly be, the Church needs to significantly improve its oversight of the process by which people join it in service.

Section Four Volunteering

- 5.33. This section considers how the Diocese of Oxford should strengthen its practice when working with volunteers within Church settings and support the crucial role of volunteering. It is current and it was previous practice for the Church of England to undertake DBS checks²³ of different types for different roles, as appropriate, regarding all volunteers²⁴. Ben Field had a clear DBS check; however, this will only identify prior police notifications and he apparently had no previous criminal record. Ben Field volunteered and performed various roles at Stowe Church. He presented as a nice intelligent young person and appeared keen to become active in the Church. He had Peter Farquhar's support and sponsorship and was considered his 'prodigy'. He volunteered and took on positions as the Parish Secretary and Deputy Church Warden without challenge. His Baptist family background gave him the language and knowledge to present credibly; this was described by one interviewee as 'he was God's person' and he had 'assumed authority'. His interest in older people, as a care assistant in the Care Home and informal carer for Peter Farquhar, was seen as evidence of his Christian faith in action.
- 5.34. More rigorous background checks may have exposed inconsistencies in his personal narrative for example, exaggerating his role at Stowe School, and his status at Buckingham University. It is unclear to what extent these were done at the time. Latest government guidance regarding volunteers working in charities is that references should be followed up as well as checking gaps in work history²⁵. Further, the aging profile of the Stowe Church community and the emphasis of the church on 'growing younger', meant that there may have been a suspension of rigorous judgement and an uncritical welcoming of younger talent.
- 5.35. In hindsight people have said that they were surprised that Ben Field put himself forward for the Parish roles, but at the time people accepted him because Peter Farquhar's judgement was respected and because he presented as intelligent, articulate and keen. His friendship with Peter Farquhar provided him with a convincing 'cover'. In the context of ongoing struggles to get people to volunteer for Parish roles, his interest was welcomed. For example, when training for a chalice bearer role, he was seen by other members of the community as not conveying the common view that it was a 'privilege' to help the Vicar and undertake this task. He was asked by the Vicar why he wanted to do this and had provided convincing answers. He gave communion to Anne Moore-Martin at home, which is a task

²³ DBS stand for Disclosure and Barring Service and refers to a national mechanism to find out whether someone has a criminal record <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

²⁴Practice Guidance, Safer Recruitment, 2016 https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20safer_recruitment_practice_guidance_2016.pdf

²⁵ Charity Commission, Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees, What to do to protect people who come into contact with your charity through its work from abuse or mistreatment of any kind (October 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

that takes people into the homes of others and can make both parties vulnerable. In these roles proportionate practices are advisable to protect those who are housebound and the volunteers. This could include working in pairs, offering supervision and support, having policies and protocols to protect the volunteer and the person being visited.

- 5.36. The learning from this case review is that there should be consideration of how voluntary roles are filled in Church settings, and assurance of consistent implementation of formal recruitment and selection processes, particularly as people are placed in positions of trust regarding others who may be vulnerable. This would enable selection to be transparent. The Safer Recruitment practices introduced in 2017²⁶ provide a clear framework for improved practice in terms of volunteer recruitment, setting out the processes for recruitment of volunteers and a more robust approach. The Charity Commission' Guidance on safeguarding regarding volunteers should now be adhered to and reinforced in all Parishes²⁷. For example, a code of conduct is essential, which includes expectations of how people should behave. The principles in the Safer Recruitment model volunteer job role go some way to making this explicit, however they do not include the aspect of inter-personal relationships. It would be timely to audit practice in the Parishes regarding volunteer recruitment to establish how robust processes are and how consistently they are applied.
- 5.37. Consulting other national organisations that rely heavily on volunteers, and organisations that advise non-statutory agencies on safeguarding adults, current best practice and processes in terms of safer recruitment are as rigorous as those regarding permanent staff²⁸. When volunteers work with adults who may be at risk of harm, this includes: detailed application forms; self-disclosure; robust interviews that cover safeguarding, equality, and diversity knowledge and skills; reference checks; a thorough induction process; verification of qualifications, training and experience; and risk assessments. During probationary periods there is monitoring and review. There are codes of conduct, clear policies and guidelines that volunteers follow, with mechanisms such as 'buddies' and 'facilitators' as well as volunteer managers to ensure that volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised, and there is monitoring and feedback. These mechanisms ensure that any organisation delivers its duties of care to the volunteers as well as to its members.
- 5.38. The recruitment, support and supervision requirements for volunteers should be proportionate to the role. In this context the roles and responsibilities of the PCC Secretary and Deputy Church Warden are important, as both roles have access to financial and confidential information, whereas the role of chalice bearer has status and religious significance. Once appointed into any role, formal mentoring or supervision and support might identify learning and support needs as well as any risks. If these had been in place, Ben Field's deceitfulness, lack of real vocation, exaggerations of his experience and qualifications and his narcissistic tendencies might have been identified. Therefore, the learning from this case review would indicate that it would be timely to develop a process

²⁶ <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance/templates-resources>

²⁷ Charity Commission, Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees, What to do to protect people who come into contact with your charity through its work from abuse or mistreatment of any kind (October 2019) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

²⁸ Ann Craft Trust, Safe Recruitment Process, <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safe-recruitment-process/>. See also NCVO resources <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers/keeping/safeguarding-volunteers>

to audit whether the recruitment, management and support of volunteers are consistently following the Church of England's guidance on Safer Recruitment²⁹ and other relevant policies, as well as meeting the Charity Commissioners' standards. It would be advisable to check whether the mechanisms for safe recruitment, training, monitoring, support and supervision, including expectations expressed in codes of conduct, regarding volunteer roles are effective. Consideration should be given regarding appropriate challenge and feedback on practice.

Section Five Identification and referral of care and support and risk of harm and abuse

- 5.39. This section considers processes for the identification and referral of care and support needs alongside any potential risk of harm and abuse. People become vulnerable in a wide range of circumstances. For Peter Farquhar the specific circumstances of his experience of abuse meant that, whilst he was aware of his deteriorating mental and physical health, and very distressed by this (see video³⁰), he did not seem to be able to identify that he was being harmed by Ben Field, who presented as his 'carer'. Indeed, this was part of the 'scam'. He was being coerced but did not seem to perceive this as such, for example when giving Ben Field a second-hand car or changing his will. He did try to talk to other Stowe parishioners but, because of their reluctance to discuss personal matters, due to his homosexuality, he was prevented from potentially disclosing any concerns³¹.
- 5.40. Peter Farquhar articulated his vulnerability and explained his hallucinations in terms of the presence of 'evil' or 'evil spirits' in his home. His distress was responded to spiritually, as it was believed to be a spiritual matter. The Stowe Vicar and other parishioners went to pray with Peter Farquhar to support him and try to reduce his distress and anxiety. They saw his suffering and reacted to it; an interviewee described this as 'using a cultural coping mechanism to pray it out'. The Stowe Vicar did express concerns and enquire about his physical and mental health; along with other parishioners there was concern for his welfare and offers of support. However, the medical consultations had not provided clarity regarding his condition and Ben Field continued to explain his behaviour as due to dementia or alcohol.. Had Peter Farquhar said that he was experiencing such severe and ongoing hallucinations and felt there was 'evil' in his home in a different context, he may have been considered for a mental health assessment and perhaps alternative interpretations and responses might have been developed. It is unknown whether this line of enquiry and assessment was followed by health professionals. He articulated his distress as spiritual and his preferred dominant culture provided a theological lens through which Peter Farquhar understood his life and explained his problems.
- 5.41. Over several months in 2015, Peter Farquhar had care and support needs and was being abused. He was seen by doctors and his symptoms were understood firstly as due to a urinary tract infection. When dementia was ruled out, Ben Field promoted the misconception that they were due to alcohol consumption or an obscure diagnosis. He

²⁹ Safer Recruitment Practice 2016 <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance/templates-resources>

³⁰ See extract included in BBC News 9th August 2019, Maids Moreton: Ben Field 'thought he would get away with it' <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-48990549>

³¹ Interviews with parishioners

then presented himself as an experienced carer providing care, rather than abusing Peter Farquhar.

- 5.42. Ann Moore-Martin was equally groomed, coerced and abused by Ben Field, and was unable to articulate her vulnerability and need for protection until she was hospitalised after a seizure. Safeguarding issues that emerge from their experiences include: the failure to question Ben Field in his ‘caring’ roles (the ‘rule of optimism’ again); his ability to block access to Peter Farquhar and Anne Moore-Martin particularly depriving her of contact with family and friends; lack of challenge of his diagnoses for Peter Farquhar’s condition (even by the first Coroner); and issues regarding mental capacity and financial decision making.
- 5.43. Ben Field presented as a reputable carer, with his experience as a care assistant in a Nursing Home. His behaviours at the Nursing Home, verbally abusing the residents (and videoing himself abusing them on his phone) were exposed in the trial³², but not identified when he was working there. His pattern of volunteering for ‘singles’ rather than ‘doubles’, which his work colleagues welcomed as supportive, put residents at risk of unsupervised access³³. However, his work practices at the Nursing Home fall outside the scope of this review. Ben Field further exploited his situation by presenting as a ‘vulnerable carer’, saying he had been attacked by Peter Farquhar, to gain sympathy and hide his role as abuser³⁴. In hindsight, this incident could have been a trigger for referring a safeguarding concern to the Local Authority Social Services and possibly prompting a safeguarding enquiry.
- 5.44. Ben Field was described in Court as creating a barrier between Peter Farquhar and Stowe parishioners by circulating information about him and therefore inhibiting direct access to him. As discussed above in Section One, attitudes in the Stowe Church congregation towards Peter Farquhar’s homosexuality may have inhibited their questioning of Ben Field in this ‘caring’ role. Certainly, Peter Farquhar was effectively deceived to the extent that he was so grateful to Ben Field that he gave him a second-hand car in recognition of the care he had received.
- 5.45. There were reports at the trial of Ben Field blocking the access by family and friends to Anne Moore-Martin. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon behaviour in other situations where carers and family members hinder access by others to the people, they are abusing³⁵. In Anne Moore-Martin’s case this was a significant factor causing concern for her friends and relatives and this ‘rang bells’ for them. Their concerns were aggravated by the knowledge of the financial abuse, gaslighting and possible poisoning that she then disclosed to them.
- 5.46. With his Nursing Home experience Ben Field was able to convince Peter Farquhar’s family, friends and fellow parishioners that Peter Farquhar’s problems were due to an unusual form of dementia or alcoholism. Whilst many people were confused by the latter – they described Peter Farquhar as ‘a drinker but not an alcoholic’, they didn’t question this robustly at the time. As Peter Farquhar’s symptoms were quite unusual, they appeared to

³² See Court papers and media reports

³³ These practices refer to residents of the Nursing Home requiring one (single) or two (double) carers to provide assistance in their personal care.

³⁴ Carers can have different roles in safeguarding – as being harmed or harming those they support. see Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2018 Chapter 14 para. 45

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

³⁵ Stevens, M. J., Martineau, S. J., Norrie, C. M., & Manthorpe, J. (2017). Helping or Hindering in Adult Safeguarding: an investigation of practice. London: Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King’s College London.

have also caused difficulties for the medical professionals undertaking investigations into his deteriorating physical and mental state. However, whilst the diagnosis was unclear, Peter Farquhar's deteriorating physical and mental conditions were evident and this had implications for him when making decisions.

- 5.47. Understanding of mental capacity and decision making is an area that is key to safeguarding adults because of the need for people to understand and weigh up risk when making decisions in their lives. Greater understanding of mental capacity, and by association the need for people to have those they trust to be able to make decisions for them when they cannot, is important for people to consider as they plan for their future³⁶. Peter Farquhar was reported to have changed his will for a second time, removing the specified time period for Ben Field to live with him to then be able to benefit and have a lifetime interest in his house after his death. He also was reported to have given Ben Field and Martyn Smith Lasting Power of Attorney. These decisions appear to have been made shortly after the book signing event where he appeared to be hallucinating (due to Ben Field administering him drugs) and was very unwell. It is unclear whether anyone questioned Peter Farquhar's mental capacity at this time to make these and other decisions. When Peter Farquhar told the Stowe Vicar he was gifting a car to Ben Field, she advised him to record this through a solicitor, so there was some awareness of the need to properly record such expensive 'gifts'. However, it is not known whether he did go to see his solicitor, or what his state of mind was when he made the final changes to his will. The role of the solicitor and her understanding are worthy of exploration but fall outside the scope of this review; it would be valuable to understand what happened in order to learn from these events. The same local solicitor, when asked to change Anne Moore-Martin's will, did breach client confidentiality due to concerns about the same beneficiary (Ben Field); at this point she seems to have recognised her duties of care and the potential safeguarding issues outweighed client confidentiality
- 5.48. The learning from this case review is that there should be wider awareness and understanding of mental capacity and its implications for decision making within the Church community. This should include factors that can affect mental capacity, such as physical ill-health, mental ill health and coercive control. Given the demographic profile of people attending Church, greater awareness should be promoted about what to do if there are suspicions about people appointed to help parishioners, particularly those with care and support needs who are at risk of abuse and fraud in the community. This should include raising awareness of mental capacity, the impact of coercive control, identifying signs of abuse in changes of behaviour and temperament, and where there are concerns about 'unwise decisions' that are out of character, and what can help the person and those around them understand what is going on. This can be included in basic awareness, foundation and leadership levels of training as appropriate to the roles and responsibilities of those attending³⁷. The processes of discussing a concern with the Parish Safeguarding Officer, reporting it to the Diocese Safeguarding Adviser or serious incident to the Charity Commission, are all important too. However, focusing on the prevention aspects of safeguarding as well as the reactive protection aspects, should be covered at all levels of training.

³⁶ Ref LPA and weblinks

³⁷ According to the current training structure. Church of England, House of Bishops (2019), Practice Guidance, Safeguarding Training and Development, <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Safeguarding%20Training%20%20Development%202019%20Final%20version.pdf>

- 5.49. There is learning from this case review regarding ‘warning bells’ when a carer inhibits or hinders relatives and friends from having access to the person they care for. Additionally, there is learning in terms of making referrals when there are concerns, and not seeing this as ‘gossip’. To quote one person interviewed ‘it is a classic example of why any disclosure however apparently unlikely needs to be reported’. (See also Section 2 above.)

Section Six Some implications for policies and processes

- 5.50. This section explores further implications from this case for national policies and processes including i) information sharing; ii) the discernment and ordination process; and iii) responses to safeguarding. The experiences of information sharing in this case were problematic, not least because there was a major criminal investigation underway, which was then followed by a trial, taking considerable time. Management of parallel police investigation and adult safeguarding processes can be challenging, especially in such high-profile cases, with police concerns about contaminating evidence being a common issue affecting information sharing. There were issues about the timeliness of critical information being shared between Church officers/clergy, as well as between the Diocese and the Parish community. This affected the relationship between the Parish and Diocese.

i) *Information-sharing*: Parishioners have said that the secrecy about the cause of Peter Farquhar’s death was problematic; questions would have been asked if the Coroner’s findings were made public. His brother has been reported to have not wanted Peter Farquhar’s name tarnished by public knowledge of the initially identified cause of death. Consequently, the cause of Peter Farquhar’s death remained a secret that only a few people knew. Other explanations were created: HIV related illness, a stroke, dementia. Parishioners have also complained that ‘the exhumation process was shrouded in secrecy’, which accentuated the lack of trust in the Diocese³⁸. As these processes are rare and police led, this suggests that it would be helpful to review information sharing protocols in the context of broader communication between Parish and Diocese, including considering how to mitigate the impact of trauma on communities.

ii) *Discernment and ordination process*: Discussion regarding the policy and practice on discernment and ordination is covered above in section 3. The learning from this case review is that rigour should be used when concerns are raised regarding applicants, including referral for formal psychological assessment as well as introducing routine psychological screening at a national policy level. Similarly, consideration of measures to increase transparency would be helpful. Further, difficulties about discussing personal lives and sexuality will continue whilst the Church maintains its current position on these topics.

iii) *Responses to safeguarding*: The Diocese undertook a review of the safeguarding practices and processes responding to the initial raising of concerns regarding Ben Field. This internal review assessed practice against contemporary procedures and expectations. It was undertaken by Church of England national adult safeguarding team leads³⁹. This review identified areas for improvement, which were subsequently addressed, for example in the increase in safeguarding capability and capacity at Diocese level. The need for

³⁸ Interview data

³⁹ Confidential papers provided by the Diocese

additional posts was identified and these have been recruited to. The practice of using Core Groups for adult safeguarding situations when allegations are raised against Church officers was not in place in the Diocese at the time that Ben Field was arrested. This practice has since been established locally, and so meets the requirements of national guidance⁴⁰. A Core Group should address any needs of the Parish⁴¹ and this provides an opportunity to challenge potential 'us' and 'them' relationships between the Diocese and Parish and instead reinforce collaborative approaches. The feedback through interviews suggests that this aspect of process should be closely monitored. Communication between the Diocese and the Parish should encourage a participative and person focused culture regarding safeguarding adults so that they are not seen to prioritise the reputation of church over protection of vulnerable people⁴². It is critical that safeguarding responses are prompt and appropriate and this should continue to be monitored and audited by the Diocese Safeguarding Adults Panel.

- 5.51. There have been changes in the Church of England's approach to safeguarding adults, which have resulted in significant improvements in safeguarding adult practice at all levels, including introduction of revised national and local policy and guidance in 2016/17 and a national programme of training, including training needs assessments⁴³. There is refreshed or new guidance that supports safeguarding adults at national, Diocese and Parish levels, promotes safer recruitment and offers a full spectrum of training at different levels to everyone involved in the church⁴⁴.
- 5.52. This case review provides an opportunity to consider a shift towards a 'learning organisation' approach within the Diocese and nationally⁴⁵. Referring back to statutory guidance, the objective of a safeguarding adults review is to promote effective learning to achieve changes in practice through 'a culture of continuous learning and improvement'⁴⁶. This involves dissemination of key messages and providing opportunities for practitioners and leaders to review findings and apply the learning to their own practice and organisations, as well as implementing the specific recommendations. Applying the learning from this case review at a national level could be achieved through including the case review in the national training modules, materials and programmes. A range of mechanisms for learning could support this approach and facilitate continuous improvement using 'lessons learnt' sessions, past case review discussion and practice audits. Using this case review would promote a broader understanding about the ways in which people may become vulnerable, due to social isolation, loneliness and lack of intimacy; secondly, this

⁴⁰ Church of England, House of Bishops, October 2017, Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers

⁴¹ Ibid, p.18

⁴² Wilson, A. & Harper, R. (2019) *To Heal and Not to Hurt: A fresh approach to safeguarding in the Church*, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, p. 141

⁴³ Church of England, House of Bishops, 2017, *Promoting a Safer Church*; Church of England, House of Bishops (2019), Practice Guidance, Safeguarding Training and Development <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Safeguarding%20Training%20%20Development%202019%20Final%20version.pdf>

⁴⁴ Church of England, House of Bishops (2016) Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20safer_recruitment_practice_guidance_2016.pdf

⁴⁵ Senge, Peter. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline: the Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday. Learning

⁴⁶ Care and Support Statutory Guidance. 2018, Chapter 14 Para 167

would promote awareness of mental capacity issues and their impact on decision making regarding safeguarding risks; thirdly this could encourage a more open approach to raising safeguarding concerns to PSOs. Finally, this case review provides an opportunity to acknowledge the sexualities of older people and consider how such personal issues can be appropriately discussed, particularly if there are concerns about exploitation or abuse.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. This case review has highlighted a range of issues and provided lessons for the future. Although the abuse and murder of Peter Farquhar and abuse of Anne Moore-Martin by Ben Field had unique characteristics, there are aspects that apply to other older people who could become vulnerable to harm. Both Peter Farquhar and Anne Moore-Martin's needs for emotional intimacy meant that they were vulnerable to grooming and exploitation. The closed culture of the Stowe Church in general, including attitudes towards homosexuality and homosexual practice, meant that Peter Farquhar's sexuality and the relationship between Peter Farquhar and Ben Field was a 'well-known secret'. The policies of the Church of England regarding homosexual practice and the approach to sexuality and relationships continues to put people at risk because it forces people to hide, lie and become vulnerable to exploitation, as was Peter Farquhar.
- 6.2. Peter Farquhar's fears were expressed and responded to within a particularly unhelpful theological paradigm. Responding in this way may have provided some comfort but did not help Peter manage what was an artificially created mental illness. It indicates the extent to which members of Stowe Parish Church had been deceived, as they did not suspect any other explanation for Peter's mental distress and physical illness than the one provided by Ben Field. Professional curiosity (on behalf of the professionals in his life), or just plain curiosity (on behalf of friends and family) seem to have been absent or deflected by the explanations that Ben Field provided. This case review demonstrates the need to remain open to all possibilities in seeking explanations for behaviour, not just the one suggested by the dominant paradigm, the person themselves or those caring for them, and not to settle on one without good reason for discounting others.
- 6.3. The case review explores issues about recruitment of volunteers as well as potential Ordinands. Ben Field pursued a 'scam' by pretending to be interested in the church and ministry, and then further deceiving and effectively grooming the Stowe Vicar and congregation by becoming PCC Secretary and Deputy Church Warden. The learning regarding safer recruitment of volunteers has already been incorporated into the current national guidance in this area – from the Church of England as well as the Charity Commissioners. However, it would be helpful to assess how effectively it has been implemented. There have been improvements in the discernment and ordination process since Ben Field went through the processes; however, further improvements in psychological screening of applicants can be made.
- 6.4. The case review has benefitted from hindsight and its purpose is to extract the learning so that improvements can be made. No system or processes can completely eliminate all risk, however risks can be reduced, mitigated and managed. The learning from the case review provides guidance on where developments can be effective to reduce risks for the future.
- 6.5. The case review makes 13 recommendations for improving safeguarding awareness and prevention as well as supporting a shift to a more open culture within the Church of

England around safeguarding in all its complexity. The learning from this case review should be promoted to illustrate the complexities of human behaviours, particularly regarding religion, age and sexuality.

- 6.6. It will require strong leadership to respond to and take forward the recommendations of the case review, to ensure that they are delivered within the Diocese and raised for wider action in the Church of England. Given the high profile of this case there could be significant national interest in the case review. The Church of England has been criticised previously for a having a culture of secrecy regarding issues of reporting abuse. It is essential that this Report is made public and the recommendations are delivered so that the Diocese and Church of England are not vulnerable to such accusations and can evidence that there has been a change in their approach.
- 6.7. Finally, there is an opportunity to shift the learning culture in the church through using this review as a case study to explore very sensitive areas for safeguarding adults and achieve change to make the church a safer place for all.

7. Recommendations

The recommendations are clustered according to the 6 areas of the review. All the recommendations are directed for the Diocese to action, although some also involve the national Church of England.

7.1. Improve safeguarding adult awareness and prevention

Recommendation 1: Promote safeguarding prevention, especially awareness of the impact of social isolation and loneliness, recognising the need for intimacy, and challenging agism and attitudes towards homosexuality, and promote this nationally within the Church of England

Recommendation 2: Within the Diocese, work on LGBTI+ inclusivity, should focus on raising awareness of the safeguarding risks for some older people and the Diocese should promote this nationally within the Church of England.

Recommendation 3: Address any culture of 'secrecy' and promote an open culture in the context of duties to care and provision of community support for vulnerable adults so that safeguarding concerns can be expressed and addressed and promote this nationally within the Church of England.

7.2. Parish Support

Recommendation 4: Consider developing and adopting a policy or protocol based on a review of what was helpful in this case, learning from Stowe, to provide tailored and targeted support for people affected and groomed by abusers, including Parish communities. This should include visibility of senior clergy, as happened in Stowe, at times of stress and distress to support the Parish and ensure that Parish leadership has the skills and abilities to support local parishioners to recover from trauma in any circumstances, and is tailored to the situation that requires it.

Recommendation 5: Consider how resilience and self-care for licenced ministers and church officers can be improved still further, to be able to cope with traumatic events, through reviewing the provision of mentoring and peer support to maintain their wellbeing after ordination, encourage take up of what is on offer, and advocate for support mechanisms to be identified in clergy training.

7.3. Improve screening processes for applicants for discernment and ordination

Recommendation 6: Consider researching, selecting and promote the use of the most appropriate validated psychometric tools for psychological testing of all candidates as part of the discernment process for ordination and promote this nationally within the Church of England.

Recommendation 7: Consider mechanisms to increase transparency (e.g. publicising the names of people recommended to be trained for ministry) to enable concerns to be raised regarding suitability of candidates for ordination and promote this nationally within the Church of England.

Recommendation 8: Consider how to effectively explore issues of personal relationships and sexuality in the discernment and ordination process, relevant to the future role, to inform an assessment of the emotional capability of a candidate, and consider producing guidance to support such assessment and promote this nationally within the Church of England.

7.4. Improve recruitment, support and monitoring of volunteers and volunteering activities

Recommendation 9: Work with Parishes asking them to regularly audit their volunteering processes and practices against Church of England and Charity Commission standards regarding safer practices in volunteer recruitment, training, monitoring, support and supervision, including expectations regarding volunteer conduct to establish if proper processes and practices are being consistently delivered and are effective in identifying risks, volunteer support and development needs. (This could include reporting through the Archdeacons visits and peer review processes with other local groups)

7.5. Improve awareness of complex needs and impact on safeguarding across the Church as a whole

Recommendation 10: Consider how to improve awareness of the complexities of risks for people with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, in particular:

- issues of mental capacity and safeguarding adults;
- issues when carers prevent/hinder access to people they provide care for;
- having difficult conversations with people who may be subject to harm

and advocate for inclusion of these areas in the national safeguarding training programme.

7.6. Policies and Procedures

Recommendation 11: Review information sharing protocols in the context of communication between Parish and Diocese, including considering how to mitigate the impact of trauma on communities.

Recommendation 12: Apply the learning from this review, particularly in terms of the specific issues highlighted by this case review, to promoting a broader learning and development approach to safeguarding adults (e.g. use 7 minute briefing for awareness raising and in training (see Appendix E) and advocate for this to be incorporated as part of the delivery of the national safeguarding training strategy.

7.7 Overarching theme: leadership

Recommendation 13: Provide strong leadership in responding to the recommendations of the case review, to ensure that they are delivered both within the Diocese and raise for wider action within the Church of England.

Appendix A Full terms of reference

Diocese of Oxford

Diocesan Safeguarding Team

Independent Learning Review re BF

Terms of Reference

Purpose of review

The case of BF is exceptional and the Diocese is determined to learn what further action is required to ensure that potentially vulnerable adults attending church are adequately protected from harm. To this end it has commissioned an independent review of its practices and responses to BF which will identify key issues and recommend how the Diocese should respond.

There are six areas of particular focus in this case and for learning for the future:

1. To identify what improvements may be needed at a Diocesan and Parish level to fully protect adults who become vulnerable.
2. To provide a high-level overview of the support needed at a Parish level and assist where possible in helping shape the future support and pastoral care of the Parish, its officers and members.
3. To review the processes of Discernment and preparation for ordination to ensure that the standards for safeguarding are consistent with best practice in selection and appointment.
4. To consider how the Diocese of Oxford should strengthen its practice when working with volunteers within Church settings and which support the crucial role of volunteering.
5. To consider the process for the identification and referral of care and support needs alongside any potential risk of harm and abuse
6. To identify any changes or developments to national policies and processes which might be recommended to the Parish, Diocese and/or wider Church of England.

Process of review

1. To review all available records within the Diocese of Oxford, the Parish of Stowe and from reporting of the case at Oxford Crown Court, relating to allegations and concerns raised about the conduct of BF and the welfare of parishioners.
2. To produce a detailed timeline and clear account of the responses by the Diocese and Parish from the beginning of BF's involvement in the church at Stowe.
3. To conduct interviews with key individuals involved in the case.
4. To consider whether responses at each stage were in accordance with recognised good practice, and compliant with Diocesan and/or Church of England and secular policy and legislation.

5. To identify learning points and any changes or developments in guidance or practice within the Diocese of Oxford and nationally concerning i/ information sharing; ii/ the discernment and ordination process; and iii/ responses to safeguarding
6. To produce a succinct report, including recommendations and an executive summary for the Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel and the Bishop of Oxford to enable learning to be shared and developments to be taken forward to strengthen the church's capability to safeguard others.

Timescales

The need to learn and respond to the issues raised is of high importance. The review is to be completed within three months. An initial estimate of ten working days for completion is judged sufficient.

The independent chair and the reviewer will conduct a mid-point check in (or earlier if requested by the reviewer) to evaluate the process and efficacy of the review.

Reviewer

1. The Diocese is fully aware of the importance of this review and the contribution that it may make to adult safeguarding and has selected Dr Adi Cooper accordingly subject to completing contract and references.
2. Dr Cooper's professional supervision is supported and welcomed by the Diocese on the basis that Dr Cooper makes the necessary arrangements to fully protect the confidentiality of this process.

Scope of the Review

The Reviewer will:

1. Report to the Independent Chair within the agreed timeframe.
2. Have access to all records and files relating to this case within the Diocese of Oxford and the Parish of Stowe and any other files felt fit.
3. Ensure that confidentiality of contributors and others involved is managed with care.

Support needs:

- Reviewer to be supported to quickly understand key concepts and processes within the Church (Key roles and responsibilities practice guidance 2017 and overview of C of E provided to IICSA). Details to be added when agreement reached
- Induction to include examples of good reviews and briefing about questions case has raised internally.
- Diocesan Secretary to be point of contact on staff side.

- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser to be point of contact for information.
- Confidentiality and security of information to be detailed in contract of service.

Terms of Reference Part B

Learning Lessons Case Review

These instructions set out the basis on which the Diocese of Oxford commissions Dr Adi Cooper (“the Reviewer”) to undertake a review into BF

These instructions are given by the Diocese of Oxford This document forms part of the agreement between the Reviewer and the Diocese of Oxford in relation to this investigation

1. Principles underpinning the Review

1.1 The Reviewer should:

- (1) Place the actions of individuals and organisations in context, showing understanding of the underlying reasons that led to individuals and organisations acting as they did, or which might explain why they did so.
- (2) Consider the actions of individuals and organisations against the standards of practice which applied at the relevant time, i.e. understand practice from the view point of the individuals and organisations at the time rather than using hindsight.
- (3) Be transparent and open about the collection and use of information.
- (4) Make use of relevant research (for example which allows the Reviewer to assess conduct at a particular date against the standards in place at that date) and appropriate evidence to inform all judgments.
- (5) Ensure that if, in the course of their work they identify additional relevant matters (whether additional allegations or failures to respond properly by a Church officer or Church body), that these are brought to the immediate attention of Oxford’s Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

2. Relevant material

Evidence

2.1 The Reviewer may wish to:

- (1) Consider the oral accounts of those with an interest in this Review, and
- (2) Consider relevant documentary evidence from the sources set out below

- 2.2 Where appropriate the Reviewer may, with the agreement of The independent Safeguarding Chair in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary, follow up any alternate material lines of inquiry, not already detailed in these Terms of Reference, which in the Reviewer's opinion might be relevant to the Review.

Oral accounts

- 2.3 The Reviewer may approach Interested Parties to ask them to give an oral account in connection with any matter relevant to the Review. Any oral account given will be recorded

Documentary evidence

- 2.4 So far as they are available, the Reviewer will review relevant documents

3. Involvement of Interested Parties

- 3.1 In order to ensure that the Review is transparent and fair:

- (1) These Terms of Reference will be shared with Interested Parties if they wish to see them.

Interested Parties will be asked if they wish to engage with the Review.

4. Content of Review

- 4.1 In light of the purpose of the Review (as set out above), based on the evidence available, the Reviewer will answer the questions which are set out in the terms of reference
- 4.2 The Review should be accompanied by an executive summary.
- 4.3 The Reviewer should identify, in an appendix to the Review, all of the oral accounts and documentary records which she has considered.
- 4.4 The Reviewer will not be able to make formal findings of fact but is asked to give a view, informed by professional judgment, as to what version of events seems most likely, on the balance of probabilities.
- 4.5 The Reviewer should identify examples of good safeguarding practice as well as examples of any inappropriate response.
- 4.6 The Review should be accompanied by a chronology of relevant events.

5. Timeline for the Review

- 5.1 Work on the Review will commence in September/October 2019
- 5.2 It is anticipated that the Review shall be completed within no more than six months from commencement.
- 5.3 The point of contact for the Review will be the Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel. It is anticipated that the Independent Safeguarding Chair and the

Reviewer will review the progress of the Review. The Reviewer is asked to provide progress updates to the Independent Safeguarding Chair on a regular basis.

6. Presentation and publication of Review

- 6.1 The process agreed in the Diocese of Oxford is to prepare a key findings summary for discussion with key Diocesan Personnel. The purpose of this is to add value to the findings and recommendations prior to final drafting not to query findings.
- 6.2 The Review will then be drafted ready for publication, i.e. with appropriate steps taken to anonymise the name of individuals who do not wish to be named and to redact such information as might allow for identification.
- 6.3 The Reviewer should send the Review to the Diocesan Secretary, Independent Safeguarding Chair and DSA
- 6.4 The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor will share the Review with the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.5 The Diocese intends that the Review will be published, although the extent of publication will be determined taking into account the review's findings, any active police investigation and the views of relatives. The Diocesan Secretary will, in consultation with the Independent Chair of the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel take all decisions regarding publication of the Review, including the timing of publication and any redaction which they consider may be appropriate.
- 6.6 In advance of publication, the Diocesan Secretary will take reasonable steps to give advance warning to any Church officer or body they consider has been subject to criticism in the Review and will provide a reasonable opportunity for that officer or body to respond.

Appendix B Short Biography

DR ADI COOPER OBE

Dr Adi Cooper is the Independent Chair of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board, and Haringey Safeguarding Adults Board. She is the Care and Health Improvement Advisor for London and safeguarding adults lead for the Local Government Association's Care and Health Improvement Programme. She is a Visiting Professor at the University of Bedfordshire. Adi also works as an independent consultant in adult safeguarding and adult social care, and as a coach and mentor.

She worked as a qualified social worker, social work manager and professional leader in adult social care for over 25 years in several London Boroughs, including 9 years as the Strategic Director of Adult Social Services, Housing and Health in the London Borough of Sutton. She was the co-Chair of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Safeguarding Adults Policy Network for several years. She has contributed to national policy development, service improvement, Care Act (2014) guidance on adult safeguarding, and the Making Safeguarding Personal program. She is the co-editor of *Safeguarding Adults under the Care Act 2014: Understanding Good Practice* (2017) and other articles on safeguarding adults.

Appendix D Glossary

Adult safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2018 Chapter 14 para. 7

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

Gas lighting

Gaslighting is a form of psychological manipulation that seeks to sow seeds of doubt in a targeted individual, making them question their own memory, perception, and sanity. Using persistent denial, misdirection, contradiction, and lying, it attempts to destabilize the victim and de-legitimise the victim's belief. Instances may range from the denial by an abuser that previous abusive incidents ever occurred; up to the staging of bizarre events by the abuser with the intention of disorienting the victim. An abuser's ultimate goal is to make their victim second-guess their every choice and question their sanity, making them more dependent on the abuser.

There are two characteristics of gaslighting: the abuser wants full control of feelings, thoughts, or actions of the victim; and the abuser discreetly emotionally abuses the victim in hostile, abusive, or coercive ways. The three most common methods of gaslighting are: 1) **Hiding**: the abuser may hide things from the victim and cover up what they have done. Instead of feeling ashamed, the abuser may convince the victim to doubt their own beliefs about the situation and turn the blame on themselves; 2) **Changing**: the abuser feels the need to change something about the victim. Whether it be the way the victim dresses or acts, they want the victim to mould into their fantasy. If the victim does not comply, the abuser may convince the victim that he or she is in fact not good enough; 3) **Control**: the abuser may want to fully control and have power over the victim. In doing so, the abuser will try to seclude them from other friends and family so only they can influence the victim's thoughts and actions. The abuser gets pleasure from knowing the victim is being fully controlled by them.

Manchester Safeguarding Partnership:

<https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/resource/psychological-abuse-advice-for-all/>

Grooming

Grooming is a form of abuse that involves manipulating someone until they're isolated, dependent, and more vulnerable to exploitation. Grooming itself is not listed as one of the categories of harm in the Care Act but many of the types of harm listed, including modern slavery, physical, sexual and financial abuse, can happen as a result of grooming. When most people think about grooming, they think about children. But adults are vulnerable to grooming too. It's a gradual process. The abuser

picks their target, build up trust, and the actual abuse, which is usually sexual or financial, doesn't come until much later. It often starts with friendship. The groomer will look for ways to gain their target's trust, often with gifts or promises. Eventually they'll start to ask for something in return, and this eventually leads to abuse. Because groomers work to befriend their victims, some organisations refer to it as mate crime.

Anne Craft Trust: <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/signs-of-grooming-in-adults-what-to-watch-out-for/>

Rule of Optimism

The 'rule of optimism' comes from the child protection field in the 1980s. It refers to social workers being overly positive and unrealistic in their assessment and expectations of parents' abilities to change in accordance with the child's needs and timescales to protect their children from harm. It is based in evidence from Serious Case Reviews that explain the rationale for social workers' judgements. However it is not only the individual social worker but the organisation, structures and systems in which they operate, that may influence decisions. Recent academic writing (Kettle & Jackson, 2017) has suggested that rather than 'the rule of optimism' we should be thinking of the 'role of optimism' which is essential to relationship based social work practice. Therefore, this can be usefully applied to other settings where relationships are at the heart of practice and optimism is an underlying principle, but critique is necessary so that assumptions can be positively challenged.

Kettle, M. & Jackson, S. (2017) 'Revisiting the rule of optimism', *British Journal of Social Work*, 47 (6), pp.1624-1640 <https://academic.oup.com/bjsw/article-abstract/47/6/1624/4554327?redirectedFrom=fulltext>