

Diocese of Bristol Domestic Abuse Statement

**Diocese of Bristol Domestic Abuse Policy**

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

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

**We recognise that:**

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

**We will respond to domestic abuse:**

**In all our activities by –**

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

**In our publicity by –**

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

**When concerns are raised by –**

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

**To those in our care by –**

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

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| **Diocese of Bristol contact for advice and support for Parishes and other church bodies is Adam Bond, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, 0117 9060100*** All concerns reported to the Diocese in respect of Church officers and Domestic abuse will be monitored and recorded by the Diocese Safeguarding Team
* Support is available to all parishes in implementing a domestic abuse policy and related practice guidance
* Training is provided by the Diocese for all those in leadership, safeguarding and pastoral positions in the Diocese and parishes
* The Diocese will work in partnership with specialist agencies including Police, Local Authorities, Community Safety Partnerships to support victims and survivors of Domestic Abuse.
* Bishops Visitors are available to support the partners of clergy whose relationships are affected or broken down as a result of Domestic Abuse, Bishops Visitors can be contacted in confidence through the Mission and Ministry team: <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/clergyfamilieswellbeing/>
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