



Beacon Hill United Reformed Church Safeguarding Policy Statement 2022

The following statement was agreed by the leadership of Beacon Hill United Reformed Church (BHURC):

Safeguarding is taken seriously by BHURC. We define safeguarding as the promotion of the safety and welfare of children and adults who are at risk of, or experiencing, harm, abuse or neglect in all forms. We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from any form of abuse or neglect regardless of age, sex, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. Therefore, as members and workers of the church, we are committed to:

- the care and nurture of all children and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults at risk
- the establishment of a loving church environment which is safe and caring for all people and where the dignity of each person is respected
- an informed vigilance about the dangers of all forms of abuse, harm and neglect within all aspects of work in the Church, and how to respond appropriately
- ensuring everyone who engages with the life of the Church is responsible for keeping people safe
- working together with voluntary/statutory agencies and other denominations and faith-based organisations.

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent any form of abuse and neglect of children and adults, and to ensure the health and safety, well-being and pastoral care of those who are or may be at risk.

We will prevent abuse for extremist or other purposes and put all suitable health and safety arrangements in place as well as safeguarding, first aid, fire safety and online safety policies that everyone understands.

We will create and maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all, especially children and adults at risk, in which the dignity and rights of each person are respected.

We believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and inconsistent with a Christian way of living and that it can affect both adults and children.

We will always acknowledge that the welfare of the child and adult at risk is paramount, and that the priority is always to act in their best interests, following

legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice guidance to enable them to have access to support and protection.

We will support everyone to ensure that as a place of worship all will work within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy. The Safeguarding Coordinator or the Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator (when available) are the persons to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed for appropriate actions to be taken. In the absence of a Safeguarding Coordinator, the Synod Safeguarding Officer should be contacted. Their contact details will be always available in our posters, websites, or other communications with the public, and are provided at the foot of this document.

We will exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of Elders and Trustees and those who will work with children or adults at risk within the Church, whether paid, volunteers, lay or ordained. We will ensure that Elders, staff and volunteers are suitable and legally able to act in their positions. We will use DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service - formerly CRB - Criminal Records Bureau) checks as part of a wide range of checks on trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure that we have a broad and informed view to assist us in minimising the risk of abuse, harm or neglect.

We will support, supervise, resource and train all those who undertake work with children and adults in need of protection.

We will respond without delay to every concern, incident or complaint which suggests that a child or adult has been harmed, or is at risk of harm, and will cooperate with ecumenical partners, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer, (LADO), and Children's and Adult Social Care Services in any investigation, whilst maintaining confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

We are committed to working with those who have suffered or suffer any form of abuse, offering appropriate pastoral support where possible as well as challenging any abuse of power, especially where it involves someone in a position of trust.

We will manage risks and those who might pose a risk to the welfare of people and the life of the Church and offer support to those known to pose a risk to children and/or adults, including supervision, referral to the appropriate agencies, and implementation of safeguarding contracts, when appropriate.

We are committed to ensuring that any allegations, concerns and complaints about abuse or neglect that we discover or suspect are recorded accurately, reported promptly and shared safely within and outside the denomination.

We will review our Safeguarding Policy, practices and procedures annually, considering lessons learned from safeguarding cases and changes in legislation, statutory guidance and good working practice.

At the time of writing, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to pose a much reduced threat to people, especially those who have been vaccinated. As a result, the government has discontinued the requirements for people to stay at home, or wear masks or keep social distance from each other when out, and has encouraged people to return to their pre-pandemic activities. We will keep up to date with official advice whilst remaining sensitive to the vulnerabilities of people who may still be more at risk from the virus, and will continue to exercise due care and caution in the management and lettings of our buildings.

We will ensure that our processes and practices in all aspects of safeguarding, including discipline, risk management, whistleblowing and bullying/harassment are in alignment with The United Reformed Church's January 2020 publication "Good Practice 5 – Policy and Guidance in Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk" (GP5). Any local policy changes will be formally approved by BHURC Elders.

Signed: 

Hugh Le Fanu, Church Secretary, on behalf of Beacon Hill United Reformed Church Elders

Date: 17/06/2022

Please note:

This brief **Safeguarding Policy Statement**, and the fuller, more detailed, **BHURC Safeguarding Policy 2022**, have been specially compiled for the use and guidance of the local URC church in Beacon Hill. They have been drawn from the considerably longer, and more comprehensive, document, "**Good Practice 5**" (GP5), together with its associated **Appendices**. GP5 and its Appendices were compiled and published in early 2020 for the use and guidance of the entire United Reformed Church denomination. They can be accessed online and freely downloaded from the URC website: www.urc.org.uk/safeguarding. There is also a hard copy available for perusal in the Hub in BHURC.

It is advised that these two latter, more detailed, documents should be consulted whenever further clarification is needed.

Local Safeguarding Contacts for Advice and Support

The **local Church Safeguarding Coordinator** is the person to whom all concerns or allegations relating to children, young people or adults should in the first place be addressed. If unavailable, please contact the Safeguarding Officer for Wessex Synod.

Safeguarding Coordinator for BHURC: Kathy Le Fanu

Tel: 01428 607 546 Email: marialefanu@gmail.com

Safeguarding Officer for Wessex Synod: Sharon Barr

Tel: 07776 178246 Email: safeguarding@urcwessex.org.uk

URC Safeguarding Office at Church House (This should only be used if you are unable to contact your Synod Safeguarding Officer)

Tel: 020 7520 2729 Email: safeguarding@urc.org.uk

ThirtyOne: Eight (This should only be used for urgent advice if you are unable to contact URC).

Tel: 0303 003 111 Mon – Fri 9 am – 5 pm (plus 24 hour service for urgent calls)

Statutory contact for concerns in the case of a child:

Children’s Single Point of Access (C-SPA)

Tel: 0300 470 9100 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Out of hours phone: 01483 517 898 to (speak to Surrey Emergency Team)

Email: cspa@surreyccgov.uk

Statutory contact for concerns in the case of an adult at risk:

Adult Social Care and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Tel: 0300 470 9100

Out of hours phone: 01483 517 898 (to speak to Surrey Emergency Team)

Email: ascmash@surreycc.gov.uk

Statutory contact in the case of concerns about an adult working with children:

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Tel: 0300 123 1650 Email: LADO@surreycc.gov.uk

Statutory contact in the case of concerns about an adult working with adults at risk:

Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager (DASM)

Tel: 0300 470 9100 Email: ascmash@surreycc.gov.uk