

Responding Well

to those who have been sexually abused

Policy and guidance for the Church of England

1st edition 2011

© *The Archbishops' Council 2011*

Published in 2011 for the House of Bishops of
the General Synod of the Church of England

Church House Publishing
Church House, Great Smith Street,
London, SW1P 3AZ.

ISBN 978 0 7151 1057 7

GS Misc 982

Printed and bound in Great Britain
by Halstan & Co, Amersham

All rights reserved. No part of this publication
may be reproduced or stored or transmitted
by any means or in any form, electronic or
mechanical, including photocopying, recording,
or any information storage and retrieval system
without written permission, which should be
sought from the Copyright Administrator,
Church House Publishing.

Email: copyright@churchofengland.org

For a downloadable electronic version of the
full document for local, non-commercial use,
please consult the Church of England website:
www.churchofengland.org

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data.
A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

Order a printed
copy from Church
House Publishing

Contents

Foreword	v
1. POLICY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND	1
Statement of Safeguarding Principles	1
1. Background	3
2. Safeguarding Policies	3
3. Theological Statement	4
4. Responding Well	4
5. The Role of Authorized Listener	6
6. Further Guidance	7
2. GUIDANCE FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND	9
Introduction	9
Who is this guidance for?	10
Terminology	11
Part A Context	13
A1 Prevalence	13
A2 Needs of those who have been abused	13
A3 Awareness in worship	15
A4 Correcting myths	16
Part B Good practice	17
About sexual abuse	17
B1 What is sexual abuse?	17
B2 Sexual images on the internet	18
B3 The impact of sexual abuse	19
B4 The impact on sexuality	20
B5 Surviving sexual abuse	21
About disclosures	22
B6 Disclosing can be painful	22
B7 Listening and responding well	23
B8 The impact on listeners	26
B9 ‘False’ allegations of abuse	26
B10 Police referrals	27
Other important subjects	29
B11 Disabilities and abuse	29
B12 Spiritual abuse	30
B13 Ritual abuse	30
B14 Cultural abuse	31
B15 Healing and wholeness	31
B16 Parish check list for those with responsibility for pastoral care	33
B17 Conclusion	34

Part C Appendices	35
C1 Glossary	35
C2 Correcting myths	37
C3 Mental health information	43
C4 Ritual and cultural abuse	48
C5 Theological reflection	51
C6 The issue of forgiveness	53
C7 Further resources	55
C8 Acknowledgements	63

Foreword

We are delighted to be able to commend this new Policy and Good Practice document which provides guidance to our Church to help us respond as positively and constructively as possible to anyone who has suffered abuse. I am particularly grateful to the group that has worked so hard over many months to produce this guidance, drawing in many cases from the experiences resulting from their own traumas and ongoing pains and suffering.

Above all, as Church we are committed to living and showing God's kind of love in every situation, to reach out to one another in openness, acceptance, self-giving, kindness and generosity. We know that this path is costly, and we know that the social face of this love is also about truth and justice, forgiveness, reconciliation and healing. This is no easy task in any situation, but especially when confronted by the suffering and consequences of abuses of power of one person over another. Much of this abuse within our society is committed by family members or close family friends, but some, shamefully, has come about within the life of the Church or linked organizations such as schools or children's homes.

We are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults, and the establishing of safer, caring communities. We have worked hard to improve our culture of informed vigilance, our practices of safer recruiting, and our safeguarding at every level of our church life within congregations and dioceses. We are conscious that there is always more to be done and that this continues to be work in progress. We must always strive to reflect God's love ever more and more fully as he calls us deeper into his way of being and living. The best of all possible ways of 'responding well' would be to ensure that abuse never happened again.

This new document, by helping us to focus on the needs of those who have suffered from and survived abuse, complements and extends the range of the work in which we have been engaged these last few years with our Policy documents. We want to support and walk alongside all those who are struggling in their own journey and process of healing and wholeness, by the quality of our listening, understanding and reaching out openly, seeking with them the justice, support and care that they need.

It is our hope that parishes and dioceses will use this document as an important resource in continuing the task of transforming our culture within the Church. This in turn will lead to increased learning and sharing, and more work in the future built upon that learning. We offer this document, together with the other policies, as another important part of helping us all 'respond well' and reaching out to those who have suffered the trauma of abuse, for their healing and ours.

✠ Anthony Hereford

✠ Paul Southwell and Nottingham

1. POLICY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

The Church of England works in partnership with other Christian Churches and other agencies in delivering safeguarding. In partnership with the Methodist Church, the following statement of principles appears at the head of each safeguarding policy:

We are committed to:

- the care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry for all: children, young people and adults
- the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and all adults
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.

To this end . . .

- We will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care and support to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognizes the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and/or isolation.
- We will seek to protect survivors of sexual abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognized good practice.

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2002, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland published a report, *Time for Action: Sexual Abuse, the Churches and a New Dawn for Survivors*. Since then, the Church has increasingly recognized the need to minister to survivors of sexual abuse. With the more recent completion of the Church of England's Past Child Protection Cases Review (2009) and developments in best practice concerning the protection of children and adults, it is timely to address the injustices suffered by survivors within our own communities.
- 1.2 Progress has been made in recognizing the consequences of sexual abuse. However, at both an individual and at church level, survivors of sexual abuse still see a need for better support and action in recognition of their suffering and pain. They continue to press the Church to provide safer communities where their experiences of abuse can be heard, and support offered.
- 1.3 Churches can be well placed, often in the heart of our communities, to offer safer places for survivors to come and where they can share their experiences. The call to follow Christ challenges us to stand at the edge of society and hear the needs of those whom we encounter on our journey. We are challenged to move beyond our own fears and reach out in compassion to those who need our support. In many situations this will only mean developing or adapting existing good work where pastoral ministry is given to those in need or marginalized within society (for example, bereavement support), so that our experience and skills within such fields can be extended in compassionate response to survivors of sexual abuse. In doing so, the Church gains hugely from the wisdom and the knowledge of the survivors themselves, who can contribute greatly to our communities.
- 1.4 The issues of sexual abuse provide significant challenges to Christians and to the Church, but setting these challenges aside will impoverish us. Finding the will and creating the means to face them will help us towards becoming all that God longs for us as his servants in his world today. If these challenges also bring a concern for our own vulnerability, perhaps this too might better equip us to understand, learn from, respect and minister to those in all kinds of crises and vulnerability.

2. Safeguarding Policies

- 2.1 The Church of England has developed a series of safeguarding policies, of which this is the fifth. This policy is set within the framework established by:
- *Protecting All God's Children* (safeguarding policy for children and young people, 4th edition, November 2010)
<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/37378/protectingallgodschildren.pdf>
 - *Promoting a Safe Church* (safeguarding policy for adults, 2006, to be updated in 2012)

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/37405/promotingasafechurch.pdf>

- *Responding to Domestic Abuse* (guidelines for those with pastoral responsibility, 2006)
<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1163604/domesticabuse.pdf>
- ‘Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment’ (interim policy, November 2010)
<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1161891/safeguarding4.pdf>

Further guidance arising from future learning will be provided via the safeguarding pages on the Church of England website.

3. Theological Statement

- 3.1 By its very nature sexual abuse, in common with all other types of abuse, devalues people. Every person has a value and dignity that comes directly from the creation of human beings in God’s own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God’s re-creation of us in Christ. Failure to respond in a way that shows respect for the value of all, according to their needs, undermines issues at the heart of the Christian faith.
- 3.2 The presence in our churches of those who have experienced sexual abuse highlights a number of important theological themes, including the affirmation of personal value as created and valued by God, issues of compassion, of justice, of inclusiveness, of forgiveness, and the role of the Church as servant of God and sign of the kingdom of God.

4. Responding Well

- 4.1 Most survivors want to be heard and to have their very real pain and hurt acknowledged. They also want a compassionate response from the Church and to see action where this is needed to ensure others are safe.
- 4.2 In cases where the context of abuse has been the Church, those who have been abused often want to be listened to and heard directly by someone in authority either within the diocese or nationally.¹ Such meetings have been successfully held in other parts of the Anglican Communion and good practice has been developed.

National Response

- 4.3 The Church of England will identify people to act as ‘authorized listener’ (see section 5 below) in those cases that are responded to at the national level of the Church. These people should work closely with, but remain distinct from, the national Safeguarding Adviser.

¹ This relates to abuse experienced within any part of what has in the past been perceived as the ‘Church family’ (for example, schools or residential institutions that have a church link), rather than applying any narrower definition.

- 4.4 The national Safeguarding Adviser is available to advise on matters relating to abuse and responding well to it. The adviser should always be informed by others working in the national, diocesan or local church context, of any case that appears likely to develop a national element through media publicity, court action or for any other reason.

Diocesan Response

- 4.5 Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser – There are two distinct roles in working with issues relating to children and vulnerable adults, but the roles are sometimes combined. Information about abuse can reach the diocese through a wide variety of routes. The Adviser provides a source of expertise and advice about all matters relating to abuse. At a minimum, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should always be informed by the diocese of those cases that relate to clergy or employees, and where matters are before a criminal or family court.
- 4.6 Authorized listeners – Each diocese should appoint carefully chosen, competent and trained people who will be able to be ‘authorized listeners’ for those who disclose, in particular for those who disclose abuse from within the church community (see section 5 below).
- 4.7 External authorities – Diocesan authorities need to remember their wider duty to the general public and also their accountability to civil authorities in matters of sexual abuse. Whether or not the alleged abuse has taken place within a church context, a crime may have been committed and others could be at risk. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will be able to provide further advice and have details of the appropriate contacts.
- 4.8 Training needs – The 4th edition of *Protecting All God’s Children* places a requirement upon each diocese to provide training on safeguarding for all clergy and licensed lay workers either before they take up their appointment or during their first year in post. Pastoral response and care of those who have been abused should either be included in such training or made an additional requirement.
- 4.9 Clergy already appointed should be encouraged to undergo specialist training. Changes in societal attitudes towards sexual matters raise the possibility of any parish priest finding himself or herself confronted with an account of sexual abuse. Some advance training is obviously wise for the sake both of the priest and of the abused person.
- 4.10 Implementation – The diocese should ensure that best practice is being implemented within both the diocesan structures and also at parish level.

Parish Response

- 4.11 Those who have suffered sexual abuse may first disclose this within the life of their local parish church. This means that each parish should reflect the following:
- Church for all – Ensure that the church has a healthy culture of welcome and inclusion, which affirms personal value for all and where no one feels inappropriately judged.

- Self criticism – We can always do better, but only if we remain open to criticism and avoid complacency. This will help to avoid the dangers of falling into denial and defensiveness if a complaint is ever made. There should always be a healthy intolerance of behaviour that is unholy.
- Training – Clergy and others with pastoral responsibilities should have adequate training. This should include the provision of appropriate responses and support for any who have suffered sexual abuse.
- Whole-church awareness – Well-informed communities become safer and more caring places. It is recommended that training be arranged within the deanery or parish level, ensuring that it is led by those sensitive to the needs of survivors.
- Specific sources of support – All parishes should have named individuals who have particular responsibilities for safeguarding children and/or adults. These people may be a good first point of contact for a survivor who wishes to disclose. Their names should be made available on church noticeboards.
- Link with the diocese – The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will be a source of guidance and support for churches encountering issues around sexual abuse. At a minimum, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should always be informed by the parish of those cases which relate to clergy or employees, and where matters are before a criminal or family court.

5. The Role of Authorized Listener

It is vital our churches are safe places for people to tell their stories of abuse, and where people listen and respond well . . .

Time for Action, p. 66

- 5.1 The need for those who have been abused to have access to someone acting in the role of listener was identified by the *Time for Action* report in 2002.² This policy now turns that recommendation into a requirement. In some situations, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser can act as ‘authorized listener’. In others, and particularly wherever there may be a potential conflict of interest because the abuse occurred within the church setting, the role of listener should be distinct from that of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- 5.2 Both male and female listeners need to be available to accommodate individual needs and choice.
- 5.3 The role of a listener should be carefully defined with clear boundaries. A listener, in the context of this guidance to parishes and churches, is

² *Time for Action: Sexual Abuse, the Churches a New Dawn for Survivors*, CTBI, 2002.

to provide an attentive and attuned listening ear to help those in need to talk about their experiences. A listener will need to be able to help an individual to think about their next step and to support them. The key attributes of the post required will be:

- ideally a background in counselling or an allied profession;
- ability to manage sensitive and difficult information;
- ability to identify when a person may require more specialist support;
- capacity to understand issues of confidentiality;
- sufficient awareness of the way the Church works.

This post requires the applicant to provide an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure and to have undertaken safeguarding-children and vulnerable-adult training.

5.4 Their training should include:

- exploration of personal vulnerabilities, self-awareness, and the need to access support for example, when a specialist counsellor may be needed);
- awareness of the various options for the individual beyond the moment of sharing their story;
- how to deal with complex confidentiality issues.

5.5 Hearing stories of abuse can be traumatic, so the Church (at national and diocesan level) should always have in place support for such listeners.

5.6 While in some cases it might be right for the listener to remain in contact, there are also times when he or she should refer the individual to another person for ongoing pastoral care. The question of whether the listener also remains in touch will require careful thought and consultation. In some cases it will be appropriate for the diocesan bishop to be consulted.

5.7 Pastoral care of the victim of abuse should always be separate from anyone carrying out further investigation into the complaint. However, if abuse has taken place within the context of church life, then the listener may want to encourage a meeting between an individual and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (either child or adult adviser as relevant).

6. Further guidance

6.1 The attached guidance has been developed to assist all those in the life of the Church of England who engage with people who have been the victims of sexual abuse.

2. GUIDANCE FOR THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Introduction

For many years survivors of sexual abuse have been coming to churches in the hope of finding not only the Christian message being lived out, but also a place where they might unburden themselves of their terrible secrets, of the shattering, shaming and isolating experiences of sexual abuse. Too often they have been disappointed. For too long some church communities have tried to silence their complaints and minimize their experiences through fear, ignorance and self-protective denial.

It is important to acknowledge that abuse is perpetrated by some clergy and others in positions of responsibility, and to recognize that survivors have often found an inadequate response from our churches. In doing so, we seek to open the way for creating communities that are safe enough for all to belong, and where survivors can relate their experiences, confident that they will be heard and receive pastoral care and support.

Abuse is endemic within our society. Statistics (section A1) clearly indicate that child sexual abuse remains prevalent, along with the sexual abuse and exploitation of both women and men, including those who are particularly vulnerable. The majority of victims find little or no redress within the criminal justice system, and few resources to meet their needs within the wider community.

While significant improvements have been made to make churches safer places, accounts of sexual abuse from the past, and current complaints, surface. Also in our churches are those who experienced abuse outside the context of church life. Responding to such accounts is not easy. This document will help local church people and members of the clergy to respond well to those who have suffered sexual abuse.

The Church owes much to those who have survived sexual abuse. Their wisdom, courage, tenacity and sensitivity, as well as the insights into the gospel message learnt through coming to terms with individual suffering, are an invaluable and integral part of our church life. However, survivors are also people with particular needs, and this document is a timely resource for everyone who would want to ensure they do not suffer further harm as a result of a poor response from the Church.

Sexual abuse impacts on many people: the individual who has suffered the abuse; partners, friends and family; the person hearing a disclosure; and the church community, particularly when the process of disclosure leads to conflict between groups or individuals within the church. This document aims to help everyone in identifying and beginning to work through the dilemmas that need to be addressed: the need for self-awareness; for support; for sufficient time to enable the process to unfold; for informed sensitivity and compassion; and for assertive action to provide justice or to ensure safety where this is necessary.

The guidance has been developed by a group of people who together share some experiences of having themselves been the victims of abuse, and of having developed insight and commitment through working alongside other survivors. They share some of these insights here as simply and directly as possible.

Even though the authors write from years of experience and are confident of the value of this document, they are aware that the subject is complex and that pastoral responses require much more than technical knowledge. It is their shared hope that, through what will be read here, pastoral responses will be better informed, capable of greater empathy and consequently more effective. This process will in turn stimulate further learning about this subject within the Church.

While these guidelines primarily address issues for those who have suffered sexual abuse, we also recognize the relationship to other forms of abuse, some of which sadly still exist within our churches. Consequently, understanding and addressing the pastoral issues relating to those who have suffered sexual abuse will have wider benefits that will better enable churches to understand and address other aspects of abuse.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for those at all levels of church life who might be involved in or responsible for pastoral ministry and the provision of care, whether within or from the local church, diocese or at national level. This includes those providing ministry and pastoral care in schools, hospitals, prisons and further education. So it is for:

- The National Church Institutions, where policy and guidance is developed for the whole Church and where staff might be approached by those who have been abused and by those accused.
- Diocesan offices and senior clergy, where staff are responsible for diocesan policy development, managing risk, responding to allegations of abuse and past cases; where staff are often approached by those who have suffered abuse and by those accused of abuse.
- All parishes, some of whose experience will already include supporting survivors of sexual and other abuse and some perpetrators.

Some of those who read these guidelines will be adult survivors of sexual abuse or know someone who is a survivor. Others who read *Responding Well* may have little or no previous understanding of the issues relating to sexual abuse. People's experiences of abuse, the impact it makes and the responses to this vary. *Responding Well* is not a work book of complete answers, but guidelines to help equip those in our churches for the process of understanding and supporting those who have experienced abuse. That journey, if travelled carefully, will be enriching, even if at times painful.

It is through an increased awareness of the issues for survivors of abuse that we will move towards our churches being safer and more inclusive places.

Terminology (see also the Glossary in Appendix C1)

Victims or survivors?

While there is particular concern in this document for those who have been abused in childhood, the authors are aware that vulnerability can come to anyone at any age. All abuse is traumatic. But there is a special situation where the abuse happened in childhood and the matter has not been addressed for many years afterwards. In that sense, they continue to be victims long after the event.

The language employed to describe those who have suffered sexual abuse is always a sensitive matter. Few would want to be defined by an experience or experiences from their past. However, they have been *victims* and that fact must not be lost in concern about correct language. At the same time, many have moved on as far as they are able and would be better described as survivors of sexual abuse or even thrivers beyond abuse: they do not want an episode or series of episodes to be regarded as the defining moment of their lives and of who they are, however much it has dramatically and tragically influenced and shaped their lives. As far as possible in this document we have used ‘those who have suffered/ been the victim of sexual abuse’, but the term ‘survivor’ is also used in an attempt to capture the complexity of the issue.

Abusers or perpetrators?

Both terms are used in literature relating to people (both men and women) who abuse children or adults. In this guidance they are used interchangeably as well as the phrase ‘people who abuse’.

Shocking language?

The subjects covered in this guidance, and the words used, are not in general use within church communities and they can create a sense of shock, disgust or distress for people who encounter these concepts for the first time. *Time for Action*³ helpfully stated: ‘we keep in mind that people who have been abused have been propelled unwillingly into this area of knowledge, and this is a cause of further abuse. We ourselves do not lose our innocence in gaining such knowledge; we lose our ignorance and become more able to support and be part of the healing process.’

³ *Time for Action*, p. 12.

Part A Context

A1 Prevalence

The following statistics demonstrate not only the prevalence of child sexual abuse in the UK but also – disturbingly – how few of the perpetrators are convicted of these offences. Survivors are everywhere in society and not least to be found within church communities. Furthermore, the statistics clearly indicate that most of those abused in childhood will not tell anyone until later or as adults.

- By the age of 16, one in six children (16 per cent)⁴ will have experienced sexual abuse during childhood.
- Three-quarters (72 per cent) of sexually abused children did not tell anyone about the abuse at the time; 27 per cent told someone later. Around a third (31 per cent) still had not told anyone about their experience(s) by early adulthood.⁵
- False allegations of rape and sexual abuse are no higher than false allegations for other crimes, such as burglary (USA 2 per cent; UK 3 per cent).⁶
- Research has consistently found that only around 3–4 per cent of all reported child abuse cases result in conviction.⁷
- Research has shown that those who are abused in childhood are likely to turn to religion, God and church communities to find meaning and purpose for their lives.⁸

A2 Needs of those who have been abused

A person who has suffered abuse will have significant potential strengths but they will also have various complex needs. This is especially so where the abuse has been at the hands of those they have trusted, and even more likely if the abuser holds a position of spiritual or moral responsibility. There will be a complex mix of feelings or emotions. Both the incident itself and subsequent consequences raise a number of issues addressed elsewhere in this report. Where abuse has taken place within the church context then these include the challenging process of re-establishing relations with the faith community and with God.

⁴ Statistics taken from P. Cawson, et al., *Child Maltreatment in the United Kingdom: A Study of the Prevalence of Child Abuse and Neglect*, 2000, quoted as the latest comprehensive research by the NSPCC.

⁵ Cawson, *Child maltreatment*.

⁶ E. Kelly, J. Lovet and L. Regan, *A Gap or a Chasm? Attrition in Reported Rape Cases*, Home Office Research Study 293, CWAS Unit, London Metropolitan University, 2005.

⁷ Kelly et al., *A Gap or a Chasm?* Also see Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre figures, www.ceop.gov.uk

⁸ K. Pargament, *The Psychology of Religion and Coping*, The Guildford Press, 1997; and M. Argyle, *Psychology and Religion: An Introduction*, Routledge, 2000.

The time between the original abuse and disclosure of that abuse varies from case to case. Some people are able to disclose soon after the abuse while others may take many years and some never disclose the abuse they have suffered.

When people who have experienced abuse come into church communities, what they need most is to be listened to openly and without judgement. It is probable that some will also need ongoing support and practical help.

Being sexually abused always involves a loss of personal control and power. When a survivor raises an allegation of abuse against a member of the church community, care must be taken so that he or she does not experience further loss of control over what happens next, including who is informed about the complaint. It is important that at all times the survivor should be consulted and involved at all levels as far as is possible, allowing for legal constraints.

Recovery after sexual abuse and obtaining closure involves a process over time. The Revd Dr Marie M. Fortune, founder and senior analyst of the FaithTrust Institute (see Appendix C7 – Further resources), has identified seven essential elements to the process:

- the **opportunity to tell the story** (to name the sin and share their experience);
- for **someone to ‘hear’** the story (that is, to believe and acknowledge the harm done and the fact that the victim is not to blame);
- receiving a **compassionate response** to the victim (that is, to ‘suffer with’, to walk with the person rather than try to ‘problem solve’ immediately);
- an **effort to protect the vulnerable** from further harm (both the victim and any others who might be at risk);
- the community **holding the perpetrator to account**;
- an act of **restitution** in as far as this is possible (though this does not necessarily include institutional or financial liability);
- unambiguous **vindication**.⁹

It is important to be clear about what a victim of abuse expects at any time when he or she shares his or her experience. While it is understandable that those in authority might be anxious regarding any suggestion of institutional culpability, this should never eclipse our higher duty to provide pastoral care. Indeed there appears to be growing evidence to suggest that where those who have experienced abuse receive a compassionate and responsive hearing to their experience, there is less likelihood of litigation.

There are occasions when all that is sought by a victim is a sincere and heartfelt expression of sorrow that the abuse has occurred or for the harm that has been caused, such as when the Archbishop of Canterbury recognized certain failings on Radio 4.¹⁰

⁹ M. Fortune, *Clergy Misconduct: Sexual Abuse in the Ministerial Relationship*, FaithTrust Institute, 2009.

¹⁰ *Today*, 25 May 2007; see transcript <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1304>

Marie Fortune's final element, 'vindication' for the victims of abuse, is best met when the Church and its leaders are prepared to 'act justly' (Micah 6.8) on their behalf. An over-emphasis on mercy can lead to a sense of injustice. Micah calls us to hold mercy and justice in balance as we walk humbly with God.

A3 Awareness in worship

There are a number of things within the regular pattern of worship that might present problems to survivors of abuse. Church activities also sometimes trigger disclosure of past sexual abuse. Many church leaders are not aware of these and might be surprised by a negative reaction to something that appears to them perfectly normal.

While most visitors appreciate a warm welcome, some who have been abused find certain physical aspects of welcome uncomfortable. Some people are delighted to receive an invitation to sit beside other members of the congregation, while others prefer a more solitary place.

A key aspect in the planning of worship is for the leader to be aware of the variety of experiences in any congregation and, on the day, be sensitive both to those who are regular worshippers and any visitors.

It is also important to:

- use inclusive language;
- learn and help others to make healthy relationships with God;
- ensure the church is a place of safety, including confidentiality and avoiding gossip through inappropriate prayer or talk over coffee;
- enable opportunities for networking if it is wanted.

Remember that:

- liturgy can hinder as well as help;

Note: the same words can trigger bad memories for some and be positive for others. Churches that provide details of service content in advance, either within notice sheets or orders of service, have noted that this is helpful preparation for those who might otherwise struggle with something within the worship.
- often as a child, attributes of the abuser can become associated with the image of God;
- Scripture is interpreted in the light of experience;
- different words, actions, smells will set off memories for different individuals;
- sharing/passing the peace can be a threatening experience and environment, particularly for some people where hugs are given. There always needs to be permission for people to stay quietly seated if this is their preferred option;
- kneeling in front of another person may invoke difficult memories;

- special services such as Mothering Sunday, Father's Day can be difficult for some people;
- an authoritarian or dogmatic attitude in leading worship or preaching might prove frightening.

A4 Correcting myths

Many have ideas about sexual abuse issues that are not always accurate. Some of these myths gain a certain amount of credence as they are passed on. The authors of this document feel that it is important to identify and correct these. Misinformation is often more harmful than ignorance. In order to do this aspect justice, we have set out the most common myths and corrective comment in a table within Appendix C2.

Part B Good Practice

About sexual abuse

B1 What is sexual abuse?

The essential feature of abuse is that it is not welcome, mutual or consensual.

Time for Action, p. 12

Sexual abuse can involve forcing a child or adult to have sexual activity with family members (incest) or other children or adults.

Government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2010) defines sexual abuse as:

forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware that it is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse as can other children.

(p. 38)

A sexual act with a child under 16 is always criminal. Some consensual acts with young people up to the age of 18 can also be criminal, for example when the older person acts in a position of trust to the younger.¹¹

For an adult, the question of whether an activity is a criminal offence centres around consent.¹² In broad terms this means whether the individual involved was able to agree to sexual activity taking place. This can be expressed or implied and

¹¹ Please note that the definition of 'position of trust' contained in this guidance (see Appendix C1) is broader than the very specific definition contained in the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and acknowledges the fact that clergy 'have inordinate power over lay people due to their role ... [they] ... have been taken into a special closeness and given privileged access and knowledge by people in their congregations and communities normally afforded only to intimate friends' (*Time for Action*, p. 73).

¹² Sexual Offences Act 2003 defines consent in these terms at section 74: '... a person consents if he agrees by choice, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice ...'.

the accused will have to show that he or she reasonably believed that consent was given for the sexual act to take place. As with 16- to 18-year-olds, the context can be very important, particularly if the accused is in a position of trust in relation to the alleged victim.

As a general rule, a sexual act is without consent where compliance has been achieved by physical force; as a result of fear of the consequences of non-compliance; where inducements are employed; or as a result of deliberate false information. Where an adult victim of sexual abuse was under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the question is whether at the time they were capable of saying yes or no.

It is often difficult for the victim to understand what has happened and why. This is not only because of the traumatic impact, but because of the context within which it occurs and the influence of the abuser. Those committing sexual abuse might seek to convince the victim that what happened was an expression of human love, a physical expression of divine love, or that it was consensual.

All children need attention and affection, so an abused child may have difficulty identifying what is not normal, especially if an abuser has an otherwise good relationship with the child. A child can never agree to sexual activity with an adult. The adult is always responsible for the abuse.

Victims can be confused because of their bodily responses to abuse, especially if they experience sexual excitement or an orgasm during an unwanted sexual act. It is important to remember that physical responses can occur even when there has not been consent to the activity. This is true for children as well as adults. Such responses do not undermine the nature of the act as abuse.

While sexual assault or abuse can take many forms, it is worth noting that the loss of personal control is a common thread.

B2 Sexual images on the internet

Sexual images that relate to abuse are put on the internet in a variety of ways. Once there it is probable that they will be downloaded, copied and passed on to others many times. Completely removing such images is virtually impossible.

This can generate a continuing sense of abuse for a victim whose image is so used. Some may come to terms with this, although there could be difficulties in later life. Others may need ongoing support.

Some images are there because young people have been encouraged to supply them by sexual perpetrators posing as online 'friends'. Typically such predators encourage their victims to post online more and more sexually explicit photos of themselves.

Other images will be of children who have been photographed or filmed while abuse has taken place.

Sometimes photos or videos are deliberately published by a young person, as an act of rebellion or pushing boundaries or in response to a need for attention. They fail to realize the possible short-term and the long-term consequences in the excitement of the moment.

Even among the many sexual images of adults, which appear to be legal, there will be some taken in an abusive situation such as under the influence of drink, drugs or emotional pressure, or taken covertly for the purposes of voyeurism.

The church community should promote safe use of the internet on church premises and at home.¹³ Advice about individual cases of abuse, or about general protective measures, can be obtained from CEOP (Child Exploitation Online Prevention);¹⁴ see Appendix C7 – Further resources.

B3 The impact of sexual abuse

The impact of sexual abuse varies from person to person. What may seem less serious to one person might affect another deeply. Consequently there is no hierarchy of abuse.

It's as if a pane of glass separates me from the rest of the world.

Quote from an adult who experienced sexual abuse in childhood

For the victim of sexual abuse, the trauma will have long-term consequences. For some, this will call for special understanding and support. Others seem able to process the experience in a way that enables them to get on with their lives with little obvious sign of damage. However, even in such encouraging situations, unhelpful memories can be triggered, resulting in disturbing outcomes.

Children who disclose in childhood will always need specialist help at the point of disclosure.

Adults who have experienced sexual abuse, in common with adults who have suffered other trauma, respond in a wide variety of ways, some of which are noted below. Some people forget or minimize the abuse for long periods but then re-experience the trauma at a later date. Some responses are positive, some unhelpful. Some may be helpful in the short term but become problematic in the longer term (for example, anger or use of alcohol). Some may intensify the person's vulnerability, while others will enhance recovery.

People recover from adversity in different ways. Individuals who have been abused are likely to feel powerless, confused and hurt. Sometimes they may carry these same fears and anxieties into other situations. Childhood abuse in particular can render survivors more vulnerable to compliance and submission, sometimes resulting from a heightened need for acceptance or approval. This can mean they are susceptible to further abuse.

The consistent support of family and/or friends can be invaluable. Good pastoral support can help a survivor to overcome a troubled period. However, when the abuse has been pervasive or has taken place involving family figures, then specific counselling is likely to be needed to help a person to recover. Sadly, such resources can be difficult to access.

¹³ For instance, see http://www.barnados.org.uk/resources/resources_internet_safety.htm

¹⁴ www.ceop.police.uk

The impact on faith varies. There might be a loss of personal faith or an increased sense of turning to God or to Jesus. There can be a sense that the Bible is meaningless, linked with an inability to pray. The language and ritual of faith can become problematic, and there can be a rejection of the institutional Church.

Abuse can lead to physical, mental and emotional health problems. People who have experienced abuse are at increased risk of a wide range of mental health illnesses (see Appendix C3 for more details). There might be a great sense of loss and grief, which can be linked with overpowering anger; feelings of self-blame, guilt and shame, or a loss of a sense of self, along with a sense of worthlessness or humiliation; an ongoing sense of deep hurt; a loss of confidence; powerlessness; feeling trapped; a diminished sense of hope or optimism linked with a diminished sense of joy or pleasure; and dissociation from reality. There can also be a sense of continual return to the emotional state of childhood. This may limit recovery until such time as the trauma is addressed.

These powerful emotions impact on the way adults or children who have been abused live their future lives. There can be difficulties in relationships, at school or at work; parenting problems; alcohol or drug abuse; involvement in anti-social behaviour; and, for some people, involvement in prostitution or other sexual dysfunction. Conversely, someone who has been abused can seek to limit the impact and work very hard to develop success in education, work and future relationships.

Surviving abuse and coping with this depth of impact across the whole of a person's life can lead to the development of huge personal strengths. Part of this will involve making decisions about breaking ties with, or confronting, the abuser. Survivors can demonstrate huge compassion and a commitment to addressing abuse, oppression and injustices suffered by others; they can experience the joy of better and more healthy relationships; of speaking out and receiving support; and of making a difference for others through fighting back by, for example, speaking publicly or helping other survivors.

B4 The impact on sexuality

Those who have experienced sexual abuse often have complications in expressing their sexuality and managing the sexuality of their intimate partners. Where there is conscious awareness of the origin of these difficulties, individuals and couples can take positive steps to address them, for example through counselling. Problems can arise where unconscious behaviours cause misunderstanding and perhaps feelings of rejection in the un-abused partner and confusion in the abused partner. This is the case no matter what the sexual orientation of those involved. Engaging in any sexual relationship may be problematic and some survivors may opt for celibacy.

If survivors are not able to recognize and manage these effects of sexual abuse it is possible that they remain vulnerable to being sexually abused again as adults. This was demonstrated in recent research relating to survivors of sexual abuse by members of the clergy.¹⁵ Sixty per cent of the women who took part in this study

¹⁵ M. Kennedy, 'Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors' (MACSAS), Conference paper, 2009.

of adult women sexually exploited or abused by ministers in the UK reported previous sexual abuse as children. Other research shows that those sexually abused in childhood are two to three times more likely to be sexually assaulted or raped as an adult than those not sexually abused in childhood.¹⁶

Research by Marie Fortune¹⁷ revealed that over 80 per cent of women in Christian churches would seek support and advice from a priest rather than from a counsellor. It is vital that clergy and others in pastoral roles do not sexualize their support and pastoral relationship with survivors. It should not be forgotten that clergy and others in pastoral roles are in a position of trust, according to the definition used in this guidance (see Appendix C1). Any sexual involvement within a pastoral, spiritual or counselling relationship is wrong.

Some who have experienced abuse will never disclose their experience, and struggle to manage their dilemmas in coping with sexual relationships in isolation. However, increasing numbers of elderly women are disclosing sexual abuse and the difficulties they have experienced in their marriages and relationships now that the subject is more in the public domain. In spite of having been invisible in the life of church communities for so long, many survivors live deeply spiritual lives that encompass their suffering in matters of sexuality, even though ‘they have had their ability to enjoy sexuality as a sacred, life-enhancing experience violated as a result of sexual abuse’.¹⁸

B5 Surviving sexual abuse

As already noted, sexual abuse casts a long and dark shadow over the lives of those affected, whether the victim or those who suffer secondary damage, for example friends, family members and church communities. Many who have been victims of sexual abuse would want to see themselves as survivors or thrivers (see Terminology Section p. 11).

Those who have been the victim of sexual abuse need to find ways to integrate what has happened through fully acknowledging their pain and suffering, the betrayal of trust and the consequences to them of the abuse. They then need to find ways to integrate the feelings and memories of abuse and the harm caused, in such a way as to enable them to live fully with, through and beyond the abuse. The process of recovery is progressive and may well follow a cyclic or spiral pathway.

¹⁶ J. L. Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, Harper Collins, 1992.

¹⁷ M. Fortune, *Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse*, Harper Collins, 1995.

¹⁸ Quotation from the website of Survivors of Sexual Abuse In Recovery Anonymous, 2010, www.sexualabusesurvivors.com (see Appendix C7 – Further resources).

About disclosures

B6 Disclosing can be painful

If a child begins to speak about being abused then listen carefully and refer to the parish safeguarding policy.

Adults find it difficult to disclose that they have been the victim of sexual abuse. Stigma, shame, guilt and fear are among the many reasons. Often their abuser will have left them to carry the blame and the guilt, and may have added to their confusion by lying about what happened. Many will not have told anyone about their experience before or, if they have, may not have been believed by their family, or the wider community. Many will not have been able to integrate the abuse, or explore and understand their memories, feelings and emotions because they have not been able to tell and share their experiences with someone else. This telling and sharing is crucial in processing and integrating their experience. It is important that those listening to adults who disclose abuse understand these issues.

Children may not speak out while sexual or other abuse is happening to them or when it has ended. Almost 80 per cent initially deny abuse or are tentative in disclosing. Of those who do disclose, approximately 75 per cent disclose accidentally. Additionally, of those who do disclose, more than 20 per cent eventually recant even though the abuse occurred.¹⁹ There are many reasons for this:

- Children may not know that it is wrong, they may be too young (babies and toddlers can be abused) or for them it is normal behaviour.
- They may not be able to describe or understand what has happened to them, particularly if it took place when they were young.
- Children are taught to obey adults and may have felt powerless to stop the abuse or to speak out. It is important to emphasize to adults or children who disclose that they cannot be responsible for consenting to an act they did not understand or that they were forced into.
- A child may fear retaliation or re-occurrence. They may have been threatened with further abuse and violence, or withdrawal of a treat or privilege, or some other punishment, if they do tell someone. They may also believe that they are protecting younger siblings from abuse by accepting it themselves, although this is usually a mistaken belief.
- Children may be told that if they disclose the familial abuse, no one will believe them, or they will be taken away to a children's home, or a family member will be removed.
- They might also be frightened of getting someone they love into trouble.
- Children often think that, in any event, no one would believe them. Particularly hard for children is when they try to tell someone and are not believed, or when they tell and all the consequences that they feared actually then take place.

¹⁹ S. E. Ullman, 'Social Reactions to Child Sexual Abuse Disclosures: A Critical Review, *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, Volume 12, Issue 1, 2003, pp. 89–121.

It can be unhelpful to ask an adult why they did not tell someone what was happening to them as a child, particularly without setting the context as provided above. It may also be unhelpful to ask why they waited so long as an adult to tell their story. Disclosing involves huge risks in the mind of the adult, who frequently remains under the perceived power of the abuser even beyond the time of the actual relationship.

Even for those sexually abused in later years, disclosure can be a difficult and challenging experience. For some there are fears of reprisal, fears of being misjudged, or fears of other consequences (especially true where complaints are made of abuse that has taken place within a church). Some people repress the memories of the incident for many years because it is so painful. Revealing what has happened can often revive that emotional pain.

Once an abused adult has told what has happened after years of silence then, for some, it can be like bursting a dam. For others, it may emerge more like a steady trickle of water. The abused person might repeat the account several times to the same person or once to several people. Such repeating is not normally a sign that someone is ‘unable to move on’; the telling is usually a cathartic experience essential for managing the trauma.

B7 Listening and responding well

As already stated, those who wish to disclose that they have experienced sexual abuse may try to do so within the context of a local church community, either to their priest or to another trusted individual. While they might have various reasons for disclosing, it is probable that their primary need is simply to be heard.

In order for someone who has survived sexual abuse in the past to tell another person their story they will need an environment of safety . . . Telling their story calls for enormous courage and a high level of trust. Since it is the nature of abuse to destroy or at least damage trust, it is imperative that when a survivor is ready to tell their story the listener must respond with great sensitivity and care.

Time for Action, p. 52

What would it take for someone to feel confident that a church would be a *safe place* where they can disclose their experience? It takes much thought, prayer and sensitivity on the part of those who have responsibility for the local church to ensure that through every area of the life and worship of the church there is an ethos of love and acceptance. It is helpful where positive and healthy relationships exist within a church, demonstrating God’s love in action. It is helpful where there is a culture of inclusiveness that respects and affirms the value of all regardless of difference, and where there is no element of gossip either within prayers or over coffee.

A person will disclose that they were sexually abused only when they feel it is safe to do so. Some might deliberately say something to test the reaction of the person to whom they are making their disclosure. This could be something shocking or simply a hint. Once they feel it is safe to proceed then responsibility falls upon the person to whom they have made that disclosure. Here are some simple but important points:

- a) Is the time and place appropriate? If not, care must be taken to assure the person making the disclosure that any suggested change is because there is a willingness to listen well. Make sure that a discussion takes place in a private place. A public location, such as a hallway, is not secure. It is always best to let a survivor speak when they are ready; do not suggest they come back another day or at another time without at least letting the listening begin immediately.
- b) Does another person need to be present? If so, check carefully that this is going to be acceptable to all involved.
- c) A distinction could be made between a listener and anyone who might provide counsel or advice. Perhaps at this stage a good listener is all that is needed. The person listening should never venture into the area of counselling or advice unless they are trained.
- d) Ascertain what the person making the disclosure is expecting. This might simply be to be heard and understood. On the other hand, they might be seeking further help or hoping for some action to be taken regarding the abuser if he or she is still alive.
- e) Stay calm. This does not mean acting disinterested or showing no understanding of how difficult it must be for the person making the disclosure. Staying calm, but not distant, can be hard when you are shocked, angry, disgusted or otherwise upset, but an overly emotional response creates a risk that the person may not tell everything about their abuse and may even retract the disclosure. It is much better to be open, while staying calm, and say to the discloser that you find the information – for instance – distressing, shocking or disgusting. This will validate the experience of the discloser. A genuine heartfelt expression of sympathy and/or words of recognition that you can see that s/he has been deeply hurt by the experience may also be helpful.
- f) Show that you take seriously all that you are being told. Survivors of abuse almost always fear that they will not be believed. While it is clear that you are only hearing one side of a story, possibly the most important thing you can do for a victim of abuse is to let her or him know that you believe their statements. This is often a crucial factor, especially to those who have made a previous unsuccessful attempt to be heard (possibly in childhood). Some will have terrible recollections of having their stories denied by others unwilling or unable to face the painful truth.
- g) Do not make judgements or statements. Listen, listen and listen again! It can be hard to take in all the implications. It is hard to hear a fragmented and traumatized story. Allow the person to tell the story in the words of her/his choice and at her/his own pace.
- h) Forgiveness is a complex issue for those who have been sexually abused. It is inappropriate to require a survivor to forgive the perpetrator immediately, when often the full extent of the abuse has not been recognized. This often reflects more on our being uncomfortable with facing the real extent of the pain. To do so can be dangerous as it can leave the victim open to further abuse or s/he may think that s/he now has to remain silent, while the abuser continues to pose a risk to others. It can also have the effect of curtailing the disclosure. Sometimes the advice

and counsel of clergy and Christian friends has been to urge the victim to forgive the abuser, in the expectation that this will bring about better progress to recovery. In fact this can have the opposite effect.

The subject of forgiveness is addressed later in Appendix C6.

- i) Victims of abuse often need to repeat the account many times. This can be frustrating to the hearer but is cathartic to the one disclosing, and helps the process of their understanding all that happened and where the blame lies.
- j) Sexual abuse thrives in secrecy. Once the secret is made public, it is much more difficult for the abuse to continue. It might be helpful to give an assurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.

Silence is a key tool that enables those who abuse to do so. It will never stop unless we find the courage to listen to what others need courage to tell. Rising to this challenge will not be easy and is certainly disturbing, but until the church faces up to this issue it will be failing in an important part of its life and responsibility.

Time for Action, p. 26

- k) Talk through in a calm manner what are possible next steps. If the incident is recent, is the person still at risk? Are others at risk? Is there someone more competent to offer pastoral care or counselling? Is this a matter that you should refer to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or consult her/him about? Take care if at all possible not to take the matter out of the hands of the person who has made the disclosure. Sexual abuse involves a loss of personal control, so be careful not to add to that, while remaining supportive. Please see section B10, Police referrals, for further consideration.
- l) We need to be dependable. The person may require several meetings and should be able to control when and where. Sometimes words are too difficult and other ways of communication may be easier. Where possible, it should be jointly agreed who should have any documentation and when, if at all, a contact with the police or other authorities should be made. In any event the church's safeguarding policy should be followed. Often support should be offered if other agencies are to be approached. On a more general level, the church can do much to foster an air of sanctuary and hospitality to make the discloser more comfortable.
- m) Be prepared to be in it for the long haul. Whether as a listener or as the person responsible for the provision of pastoral support, the person making the disclosure needs to know that you will continue to be there for them. Be clear about what you might be able to offer.
- n) Offer confidentiality but be clear about the limits on confidentiality where there is any continuing risk/harm to others. This should be explained carefully so that the person can understand the reasons (see section B10, Police referrals).
- o) Ensure that your relationship remains consistent. Keep in contact and ensure that you have other interaction off topic. It is all too easy for a survivor of abuse to feel they have lost friendships by disclosing.

B8 The impact on listeners

In *Time for Action* there is a recommendation that churches develop better listening within their communities,²⁰ but there are no specific suggestions as to how this could be done. This policy now sets out this framework for the Church of England. There needs to be a process of training and awareness-raising.

Further, there needs to be recognition of the human responses to hearing details of sexual abuse. This applies to people who have been hitherto uninformed about sexual abuse but find themselves trusted with a distressing disclosure. It also applies to people who have themselves been abused and are aware of what happened to them, but remain unaware of the range of experiences of others who have been abused. It also applies to professional listeners who can become burned out with secondary trauma. Informed support needs to be given to those who listen to traumatic or disturbing accounts. All of us need to reflect carefully about how we respond and to increase self-awareness about the personal impact of these matters.

B9 ‘False’ allegations of abuse

Allegations of sexual abuse have serious damaging consequences for those who are accused, for their families, friends and colleagues. If the alleged abuser is someone of good standing within a church then it may have a divisive impact. Because of this, there can be an understandable hesitation to take action, in case an allegation should prove to be false. However, there can often be greater concern that someone might be falsely accused than that someone might have been abused.

Fears that an allegation could be wrong should not distract from legitimate concern and action for those who disclose sexual abuse.

As noted elsewhere in this document, false allegations of rape and sexual abuse are no higher than false allegations for other crimes, such as burglary (USA 2 per cent; UK 3 per cent).²¹ This means that there is a huge gap between rates of criminal conviction for sexual crimes – less than 10 per cent – and those who report abuse without ‘false’ allegations – over 95 per cent. This is explored further in Appendix C2 – Correcting myths.

Experience demonstrates that the most effective way of identifying a false allegation is to respond to all concerns raised in the same way.²² Through the ensuing investigative process, including the work of the police and children’s services, any inconsistencies, flaws, gaps or contradictions can be quickly identified. This is far more constructive than failing to respond well based on a concern about whether the allegation is true. Indeed, a poor response, or perhaps not responding at all, risks failing to protect anyone properly. (As an example of

²⁰ *Time for Action*, Part 9, p. 152.

²¹ Kelly et al., *A Gap or a Chasm?*

²² Lord Laming, in his inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié, recommended that the best approach for all investigations in relation to abuse is that of ‘respectful uncertainty’. That is to say, what is required is respect for everyone involved while carrying out a thorough assessment of all concerns raised. This translates effectively into the matters dealt with by this policy – although it should be remembered that it is for the police and children’s services to carry out any formal investigation. See the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report 2003, House of Commons.

a good response, see the Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin,²³ which includes as one of the 50 case studies the account of Fr Ricardus, which was a false allegation.)

Only when a criminal or civil process has been tasked with determining whether an allegation is false, and has so found, can an allegation be said to be false. The use of the term ‘false allegation’ in relation to reports of abuse on any other basis is wholly wrong in fact and in law and should be avoided.

Organizations set up to provide services for, or ministry to victims of sexual abuse, their families and communities are not the place for providing support and services to people who believe they have been wrongly accused of sexual abuse. Support and services for people who have been accused of sexual abuse need to be separate and distinct from support for those sexually abused.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind the difference between the criminal burden of proof (‘beyond all reasonable doubt’) and the civil burden of proof (‘on the balance of probabilities’, that is, more likely than not). In order to manage risk as effectively as possible, the Church operates to the civil burden in most situations. This can cause confusion when someone has been found ‘Not Guilty’ in a criminal court.

B10 Police referrals

Dilemmas arise when determining whether and when to refer a matter to the police. An important part of recovery for the person who has disclosed abuse is to be entrusted with power over their own history. This includes deciding when and how it should be shared, so initially seek consent from the individual concerned. However, it is important to recognize and to acknowledge that where others may still be at risk, the police (and possibly children’s/adult services) will need to be informed. This becomes more complex still with the recognition that without the individual feeling ready to give consent and co-operation, s/he is likely simply to exercise his/her right of silence or non-co-operation, or even retract the information.²³ This means that it is extremely unlikely that any genuine safeguarding can take place by the overriding of his or her consent.

At all times, ensure that you discuss with the person disclosing, what the options are and what you recommend should happen next.

Explain that the Church is committed to reporting cases to the police or children’s/adult services, where it is in the public interest to do so, for instance where it is necessary to protect children from significant harm; protect adults from serious harm; or to prevent crime and disorder (for example, where it is believed that an individual in the church has harmed a child or an adult and/or it is believed that the information disclosed indicates that an individual still presents a risk of harm to a child or an adult).

²³ Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin, July 2009, from www.cps.dublindioocese.ie

²⁴ It is important to remember that the person disclosing abuse always has the absolute right to remain silent if s/he so chooses.

That said, always seek the views of the person making the disclosure, thus validating and making use of the individual's expertise about their own situation. This process can take time. It is important, both for the individual but also for the efficacy of any action involving the police, that this issue is not rushed.

Government guidance *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers* (2008)²⁵ states:

The key factors in deciding whether or not to share ... [such] information [i.e. refer the matter to the relevant authorities] are necessity and proportionality, i.e. whether the proposed sharing is likely to make an effective contribution to preventing the risk and whether the public interest in sharing information overrides the interest in maintaining confidentiality. In making the decision you must weigh up what might happen if the information is shared against what might happen if it is not ...

Working with these dilemmas, and the timing of decisions, is a skilled task and will always require the person offering support to consult with others such as the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (see *Protecting All God's Children* and diocesan child protection procedures for further detail).

Where a matter is referred to the police, then specific pastoral support issues will arise. None of these difficulties is set out in order to dissuade anyone from telling the police. As noted above, sexual abuse thrives in secrecy, and telling the police is a major step in destroying that secrecy. Rather, it is important that everyone involved understands the challenges that will inevitably arise. All of this calls not only for good pastoral skills but also for the investment of considerable time.

- a) The discloser will have to undergo police interviews – often videoed. Police officers who undertake this work should all now be specially trained and sensitive to the needs of individuals, although the service can still be variable. The discloser might find it helpful to have someone present for support (if allowed by the police), but it is vital that this person does not take part in the interview in any way.
- b) It is probable that the person(s) against whom a complaint has been made will be arrested and interviewed by the police. They might or might not be charged. If charged, it is probable that they will be released on bail. While they might be prohibited from making contact with their accuser, this is inevitably a period where the discloser is likely to be anxious and pastoral support might need to be increased.
- c) Once a formal complaint has come to light, people tend to take sides. If the accusation is against someone normally held in high respect, then the discloser could suddenly find himself/herself losing friends or become the object of criticism. Church congregations can split over this issue and the priest will need skilled support to enable people to achieve some

²⁵ *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers*, 2008, para. 3.40, p. 21. See [www.government.co.uk/attachments/information sharing guidance for practitioners and managers.pdf](http://www.government.co.uk/attachments/information%20sharing%20guidance%20for%20practitioners%20and%20managers.pdf)

reconciliation while ensuring that the person who has disclosed abuse receives full support and that their safety is assured.

- d) The formal process from receipt of a complaint and someone coming to court can often be protracted. Regular periodic pastoral support through all of this time is important.
- e) If the discloser and the accused are both involved in the same local church, then this will prove a difficult time for whoever has immediate pastoral responsibility within that church. The demands upon members of clergy in such situations should not be underestimated, and they should not hesitate to draw upon resources available to support and advise them.
- f) The Police and Crown Prosecution Service will seek to give advice and support when the time of trial comes. However, if the accused pleads not guilty, then the discloser will be called upon to give evidence in open court. This is very likely to prove emotionally demanding if not seriously traumatic. Further support can be available from the Victim Support Service.
- g) Whatever the verdict, the discloser is likely to face further problems. If, as often happens, the accused is found not guilty, despite all the abused person knows, the sense of injustice and being failed will be immense. If the accused is found guilty the sentence might not be as severe as the discloser might have wished. On the other hand, sometimes people are shocked by the severity of a sentence and can feel guilty at bringing this about. There are sometimes further complications to manage as relatives and friends of the accused then might respond badly towards the individual.

Other important subjects

B11 Disabilities and abuse

Pastoral support for a disabled person who was sexually abused as a child or young person has to take into account the nature of their impairment. There should always be consideration of whether it is necessary to access specialist help.

It is worth noting that a disabled child is 3.4 times more likely to be abused than a non-disabled child.²⁶ The following are some of the reasons why a disabled child may be more vulnerable to abuse.²⁷

Those who abuse:

- can think it is safer to victimize a disabled child;
- may be especially attracted to the immature behaviour – no need to interact on an adult level;
- think that disabled children are of less value.

²⁶ P. M. Sullivan, and J. F. Knutson, 'Maltreatment and Disabilities: A Population-based Epidemiological Study', *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 24(10), pp. 125–27.

²⁷ 'Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors', paper presented to the Working Group by Margaret Kennedy, founder of MACSAS, April 2009.

Children with disabilities:

- may receive less information on abuse;
- may be less likely to understand the inappropriateness;
- often have less choice about everything, and this can be linked to less opportunity to learn about whether to accept or reject sexual advances;
- often do not believe they can have control over what happens to them;
- can have low self-worth – if they do not believe their wishes should be taken into account, then this increases their vulnerability;
- can be more dependent, needing extra care (carers can abuse);
- may find it difficult to distinguish between different sorts of touch when most or all of body care is attended to by other people (boundary confusion);
- can sometimes receive less affection from family or friends, and are therefore more vulnerable to a sexual relationship presented as a form of attention or friendship;
- may not be considered credible if they attempt to disclose;
- may lack assertiveness (sometimes a consequence of over-protective caring);
- may have limited vocabulary and skill to complain.

B12 Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is not covered within the four-fold definition of abuse²⁸ but is of concern both within and outside church communities.

Harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing or deliverance ministries. Any of these can result in children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. Religious beliefs and practices can also be deliberately twisted by a perpetrator to legitimize sexual abuse or to groom potential victims.

Those people who are abused by clergy suffer profound spiritual abuse. The abuse shatters the victim's relationship and trust in the Church, severely impacts on the ability to maintain any connection with the sacred, and creates profound confusion and doubt about God's love for the victim. Kennedy²⁹ identified a dual traumatization for these victims, namely the abuse itself and the response of the Church: 'When women reported their experiences using official structures and avenues open to them, the response was at best mixed and at worst damaging.'

B13 Ritual abuse

Ritual abuse is the physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual abuse of children and adults in an organized and systematic way involving usually more than one adult abuser.

²⁸ Physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. See the Government publication *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2010.

²⁹ Kennedy, 'Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors'.

Ritual abuse may be used to imply some sort of religious or spiritual nature to events whether by a religious group or paedophile ring. Many of those who have contact with TAG (Trauma and Abuse Group) report being ritually abused and state that it was by groups committed to satanic worship or those involved in witchcraft.

TAG is available as a source of specialist advice (see Appendix C7 – Further resources).

See further discussion at Appendix C4 – Ritual and cultural abuse.

B14 Cultural abuse

Sexual abuse happens to all children both males and females, irrespective of their social background, culture, their abilities, religious belief or any other factor.

It would be easy to dismiss cultural differences within our church communities as either not faith related, or not issues that concern the Church of England. This is to ignore both the reality of today's Church, which has at its core multi-cultural congregations, and where church growth is happening. Changes in immigration means that people are travelling to the UK from other countries, both within and beyond the European Union. People bring with them, as an important source of strength, their own cultural practices along with their patterns of religious belief and practice.

See further discussion at Appendix C4 – Ritual and cultural abuse.

B15 Healing and wholeness

For those who have experienced abuse and those who seek to minister with and alongside them, the subject of healing can be painful and problematic. For some victims of abuse, healing is a process that they recognize as relevant, valuable and ongoing in their recovery and moving on. Some are also keen that justice and accountability are key components of their healing and a wider sense of reconciliation and restoration – see the seven stages of justice and restoration adapted from Marie Fortune (section A2 – Needs of those who have been abused, pp. 13-15 above). Indeed, some form of justice may be part of every survivor's wish. However, both justice and healing can often mean different things to different survivors, and for some it seems unattainable.

Healing and justice are bound up with continuing transformation of the lives of those who have experienced abuse, so that they are more able to recover and flourish. Healing is a journey towards wholeness, whereby survivors may move from being victims less often and survivors or 'thrivers' in more of their lives.³⁰ This can be a cyclical process in which there are steps back as well as steps forward. Healing is more of an 'internal' process where survivors may often make both conscious and unconscious progress.

³⁰ J. Chevoux, *From Silence to Sanctuary: A guide to Understanding, Preventing and Responding to Abuse*, SPCK, 2005.

Justice, on the other hand, is an external process over which the survivor often has little influence. Movement in a healing process may be affected by lack of justice or accountability on the part of individuals and institutions.

Healing is not instant nor an easy process and there will be a lifetime of dealing with the effects of early trauma. One of those who contributed to the report 'Tracing Rainbows through the Rain'³¹ concerning Methodist responses to *Time for Action*, provided the working group with a helpful image of how the experience of abuse continues to impact upon daily life:

One of the ships bombed and sunk in Pearl Harbour was left as a war grave. From the surface, you cannot see it is there. But from time to time oil from the ship 'bubbles to the surface' as a haunting reminder of pain, devastation and death experienced over half a century before.

From a male survivor

Sadly, when survivors of abuse seek help in their journey of healing, some people in churches in the past have acted inappropriately and sought to impose healing rituals or prayers upon the individual survivor. Healing is a gift, but recipients need to participate willingly and to have control over how they might be touched, have hands laid on or be blessed. On rare occasions further abusive acts have also occurred from the person seeking to offer care or healing.³²

On the other hand, for some survivors much of their past hurt and pain has been dealt with positively in their life and growth as part of their experience of church, and much healing and flourishing has occurred.

Good practice in pastoral care and guidelines in safeguarding need to apply to all situations where healing prayer, healing practices and deliverance ministry are offered across the whole of church life. The quality of pastoral care, personal conduct and ministry in these circumstances needs to be of the highest standard and above reproach.

To assist there has been guidance drawn up as follows:

1. House of Bishops' guidelines on deliverance ministry, 1975.
2. House of Bishops' guidelines for good practice in the healing ministry, 2000.
3. Churches Together for Healing, ecumenical guidelines for good practice in the healing ministry, 2000.

³¹ Methodist Conference report, 2006.

³² See *Time for Action*, p. 74.

B16 Parish Check List for those with responsibility for pastoral care

This should be completed annually.

Question	Yes/No	Comment
Are the members of your pastoral team familiar with this document?		
Are they aware of the boundaries between listening and counselling in respect of vulnerable people?		
Do they know when to seek help/advice from others when encountering or working with adults who disclose abuse?		
Is your congregation aware of who are the good listeners in your church, whom they might safely approach with concerns?		
Are your worship/service leaders aware of the way language and situations in church might invoke difficult memories for adult survivors of abuse?		
Do the worship leaders endeavour to make the worship, i.e. use of liturgy, music, etc., inclusive of adult survivors?		
As the pastoral co-ordinator are you familiar with local and national resources available for adult survivors and have you made your team aware that you hold such information?		
Having read this document, have you ensured that you have continuing access to it, and have a copy to share with others?		

B17 Conclusion

*...what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God.*

Micah 6.8, NIV

In conclusion, we echo the words of Bishop Anthony and Bishop Paul from their Foreword to this document:

It is our hope that parishes and dioceses will use this document as an important resource in continuing the task of transforming our culture within the Church. This in turn will lead to increased learning and sharing, and more work in the future built upon that learning. We offer this document, together with the other policies, as another important part of helping us all 'respond well' and reaching out to those who have suffered the trauma of abuse, for their healing and ours.

Part C Appendices

C.1 Glossary

Amnesia (traumatic) – Difficulty with being able to intentionally recall part or all of an extreme trauma event, which becomes dissociated from normal consciousness and memory.

Body Memory – Traumatic events relived and felt physically but not necessarily with visual cues.

Counselling – Professional counselling, outside the church community. This should not be confused with pastoral care. The decision to seek professional counselling must remain with the survivor.

Disclosure – The action or an act of making an event known or visible (*Oxford English Dictionary*). It may also refer to a person's narrative, story or account of their experience.

With reference to sexual abuse, there are two types of disclosure: the initial or primary disclosure, and disclosure that is ongoing throughout a person's life.

Dissociation – A defence mechanism that can occur as a result of severe trauma and abuse. Traumatic memories and associated thoughts and feelings are kept separate from ordinary awareness.

Flashbacks – Vivid pictures and memories, which may include sensations of smell, sound, touch or taste, of the person's traumatic experience.

Grooming – A transient feature that is difficult to capture and impossible to decide when it begins and when it ends. That said, it is not a new concept, and it is not restricted to online behaviour. It is generally seen as part of a cycle of abuse and broadly is the process of preparing a child for abuse. It can include, for instance, befriending a potential child victim to try to persuade the child to acquiesce to sexual activity. It can also involve building up trust with the adults that surround a child, in order to make that child more vulnerable. In a church context this can mean the building up of trust with the whole church 'family'.

Pastoral Care – Being alongside a person within the setting of the church community, offering companionship and spiritual accompaniment.

Perpetrator – The adult inflicting and responsible for the sexual abuse.

Paedophile ring – A group of child sex offenders working in consort to share information, contacts or victims for abusive purposes.

Position of trust – When one party, through their work or activity, whether paid or unpaid or as a volunteer, is in a relationship of care with a child or young person/vulnerable adult that puts him or her in a position of power or influence over that child or young person/vulnerable adult.

Repression – The unconscious blocking of traumatic memories and feelings.

Respectful Listening – Listening in an open non-judgemental way without any assumption as to the nature of a person’s experience in relation to the effects of the abuse and its severity.

Triggers – An object, sensation, thought or association that can cause a person to have a flashback of a traumatic event.

C2 Correcting myths

<p>1 <i>Child sexual abuse is a rare occurrence.</i></p>	<p>Child sexual abuse happens every single day – year in, year out. Estimates vary but known numbers are far more than reported. It can happen to anyone at any time. Research indicates that one in four girls and one in six boys will be abused before their eighteenth birthday.³³</p>
<p>2 <i>Sexual abuse is non-violent, and therefore non-damaging.</i></p>	<p>It is always damaging, it is always destructive and can be violent. Attack and forced penetration occurs in a small number of cases. Force is rarely used to sexually maltreat a young child or adolescent. Unfortunately, the psychological damage may lead to lifelong trauma.</p>
<p>3 <i>Survivors of sexual abuse always go on to abuse.</i></p>	<p>Most people who have been sexually abused DO NOT become sexual offenders. Research has found that sexual offenders are more likely to have experienced physical and emotional abuse, including bullying, in their childhood, and this appears to be a factor in sexually abusive behaviours. However, it is possible that someone who has experienced sexual abuse has been or is a perpetrator of sexual abuse.</p>
<p>4 <i>There is no harm in child abuse images on the internet and anyway he/she looked at it by mistake.</i></p>	<p>Child abuse images are not a separate genre outside of other forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation, but one practised within a cycle of exploitation. Individuals who seek out child sexual abuse images on the internet have a sexual interest in children.</p> <p>NB: A child will have had to be abused for the image to be on the internet.</p>
<p>5 <i>The child is being seductive, which is why it happened.</i></p>	<p>The child does not invite a sexual advance from an adult, nor is the sexual assault the child's fault. Some children may have learnt to respond in a sexual manner to certain people or situations. Many perpetrators teach the child to act this way, and fool the child into thinking it is all their idea or responsibility. The adult is always responsible, yet survivors often struggle with a feeling that they are guilty because they did not stop it.</p>

³³ Cawson et al., *Child Maltreatment*.

<p>6 <i>Children cannot always be believed. Most stories about sexual abuse are 'planted' by another adult with a revenge motive such as sometimes seen in divorce, or a child may just be trying to get attention.</i></p>	<p>Children seldom make up stories about sexual abuse. Children who have not been abused do not have the explicit knowledge of sexual acts or reactions. They do not know the common emotional reactions that are consistently described. Children who report abuse, then later 'take it back', may do so because of many fears, such as losing someone they love who may have been or will be removed from their family. Children may have been threatened with physical abuse or abandonment by the perpetrator. They may also think they are protecting other siblings.</p>
<p>7 <i>Sexual abuse would not have occurred if the perpetrator had not been drinking or using drugs. Therefore that person is not really responsible.</i></p>	<p>Using alcohol or drugs does not cause abuse; it may loosen inhibitions. Sex offenders will use cognitive distortions to justify their abuse. Do not assume that just because someone stops using drugs or alcohol they will be any less of a risk.</p>
<p>8 <i>No Christian would sexually abuse a child and anyway coming to church will make all the difference to their problems.</i></p>	<p>Many convicted sex offenders attend church for a period after their release. It is important to understand the risks involved in ministering to an offender and to balance their needs with those of a congregation safely. Multi-Agency Public Protection Guidance now states that religious communities must put in place effective arrangements that allow them to ensure they are able to protect their community while allowing a sex offender to worship in a safer way. The Church is now part of important inter-agency work with the police and probation departments.</p>
<p>9 <i>If there was no conviction it means no abuse took place.</i></p>	<p>Fewer than one in 50 sexual offences leads to a criminal conviction.</p>
<p>10 <i>Children and young people are abused because they do not have protective parents.</i></p>	<p>Often, children can be abused and the best of parents could not have done anything about it. Sexual offenders are persistent and persuasive and anyone can be taken in by them. They will often befriend and reassure parents in order to become trusted with their children. Even the most attentive and well-meaning parents may not be able to protect their child against a perpetrator, but abusers can also target children whose parent(s) may be naive or vulnerable. Parents can provide a more protective environment by assessing environments, knowing people who associate with their children and educating their child. Remember too that parents can also be abusers.</p>

<p>11 <i>Strangers should be watched, as they usually abuse children.</i></p>	<p>85 per cent of children are sexually abused by someone they know. One third are family members, relatives, neighbours and/or family friends. Indeed, the grooming process can include befriending adults that surround a child, in order to gain sufficient access to that child (see Appendix C1 – Glossary). Half of those who abuse are adults in positions of trust.³⁴ Sex offenders look for any chance and opportunity to sexually abuse children, so remaining vigilant is important.</p>
<p>12 <i>Most sexual abuse occurs in one-off episodes.</i></p>	<p>In one survey 66 per cent of victims experienced repeated abuse for over 5 years. Only in 6 per cent of cases was it a single event.³⁵</p>
<p>13 <i>The child always felt negatively towards his abuser.</i></p>	<p>This is not always the case. Sometimes the abuser, male or female, is a parent, sibling or other close family member, or a person in a position of trust, held in high regard or friendship.</p>
<p>14 <i>Sex abusers can easily be treated.</i></p>	<p>It can be hard for a person to become successfully involved or engaged in a treatment programme. Being in prison does not mean an individual will have necessarily received treatment. Treatment is designed to help offenders change their thinking patterns so that they can acknowledge they have a problem and that their behaviour is inappropriate, harmful and illegal. Treatment can enable offenders to recognize patterns in their behaviour and faulty thought processes that make committing further offences more unlikely. Treatment can help an individual to avoid situations where children are present, or lapses into risk behaviour or re-offending. It is a long process and individuals must acknowledge their difficulties, be supported and committed to change. It is a lifelong process.</p>
<p>15 <i>Most perpetrators are recognizable as being potentially harmful.</i></p>	<p>Abusers look and act like everyone else and are often charismatic and charming. There are, however, a number of historical and highly stable predictor variables such as previous offence history and deviant sexual preferences, but the research on dynamic (changeable) risk factors is limited. No clear data exists on what can be considered to be completely reliable risk indicators.</p>
<p>16 <i>Sexual abuse is an over-reported crime.</i></p>	<p>Research suggests that only 38 per cent of all rapes and sexual assaults are reported.³⁶</p>

³⁴ Eleven per cent of children experienced sexual abuse by people known but unrelated to them. Five per cent of children experienced sexual abuse by an adult stranger or someone they had just met. P. Cawson, et al., *Child Maltreatment*.

³⁵ Home Office research, Development and Statistics Directorate, March 2004.

³⁶ Cawson et al., *Child Maltreatment*.

<p>17 <i>Most perpetrators are dirty old men.</i></p>	<p>Men? It is true that the majority of sexual offences are committed by adult males. Women also sexually abuse children and young people.</p> <p>Old? One third of all sexual offences against children are committed by other children and young people. 42 per cent of children treated at sexual assault centres reported their abuser as being an adolescent.³⁷</p> <p>Dirty? Most offenders are extremely clever at targeting, grooming and then maintaining power over selected victims. This skilled behaviour does not fit with the stereotype of ‘dirty old man’.</p>
<p>18 <i>Sexual abuse only happens to poor people.</i></p>	<p>The fact is that sexual abuse occurs in ALL social and economic groups.</p>
<p>19 <i>It’s more difficult for a child to get over a sexual assault than for an adult.</i></p>	<p>If the abuse is not pervasive (i.e. does not occur more than once) and if it is responded to well by the adults close to the child, the chances are that the child victim can be helped to deal with the trauma at a faster rate than the adult will. Where the abuse is pervasive and perpetrated by an adult close to the child, the impact can be lifelong.</p>
<p>20 <i>Most cases of child sexual abuse are reported to the police.</i></p>	<p>Relatively few cases are reported to the police. Only the most sensational cases are reported in the press. When the abuse involves a relative, there is less chance that the police will be informed as children often only feel safe to disclose when they are no longer living with the abuser.</p>
<p>21 <i>Incest occurs because a man’s wife is not satisfying him sexually.</i></p>	<p>Incest occurs because of a strong desire to have power over someone else; the abuser does not control or get help for unhealthy desires and cognitive distortions. It is never caused by the non-perpetrating spouse, who is often not aware of what is happening.</p>
<p>22 <i>Homosexuals are most likely to assault children.</i></p>	<p>This is a harmful stereotype that results in intolerance. Most sexual abusers of children are heterosexual. Most abusers have relationships and live in a traditional family unit.</p>
<p>23 <i>Viewing child abuse images on the Web will stop a potential abuser from actually abusing.</i></p>	<p>This is not the case. Also in order for the images to be available, children have been abused. These images will stay on the Web for ever.</p>
<p>24 <i>It’s not rape if the couple is dating or is married.</i></p>	<p>Sexual activity without consent in any relationship can qualify as sexual assault.</p>

³⁷ Cawson, et al., *Child Maltreatment*.

<p>25 <i>Women often falsely accuse men of sexual assault or rape (for example, to get back at them, or because they regret or feel guilty about having sex).</i></p>	<p>Nearly all rapes are truthfully reported and, in fact, rapes are vastly underreported.</p>
<p>26 <i>Sexual abuse that occurs before a child can talk, or at a very early age, is forgotten and does not cause any harm.</i></p>	<p>Children who have been abused at a pre-verbal level sometimes find it even harder to work through the painful after effects because they have no concrete memories to work from. They often find their life being sabotaged by feelings flashbacks, overwhelming negative messages and painful core feelings.</p>
<p>27 <i>It's not sexual abuse when a 24-year-old man has sex with a "willing" 14-year-old.</i></p>	<p>Sexual abuse is about a power differentiation. An adult has more power than a young person. There is considerable developmental difference between a teenager and an adult. A child is never responsible for abuse. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes clear that the age of consent is 16. Sections 9-13 inclusive of that Act clarify that any sexual activity involving consenting children under 16 is unlawful.</p>
<p>28 <i>Children can stop abuse by just saying no or telling another adult.</i></p>	<p>Perpetrators frequently don't stop when a child says no – there is a power difference. They do often pick a child who appears more vulnerable overall. This child is less likely to be assertive and more easily deceived. Often the abuse escalates over a period of time. The perpetrator tricks the child (and often those around the child). The perpetrator also may threaten the child with physical harm, family abandonment, abuse of a sibling or belief that they are bad and he/she would not be touching them unless they had not asked for it. Teach children to say no and keep telling until an adult listens and does something to protect them. But, don't be angry with a child who does not tell you. Something within the child's environment or the abuse by the perpetrator has stopped that from occurring. Focus anger at the perpetrator, not the victim. Sometimes the child tells a parent and is not believed, or the parent confronts the abuser and may then believe the abuser's story.</p>

<p>29 <i>False allegations are a massive problem in sex offences.</i></p>	<p>As clearly set out elsewhere in this document, false allegations of rape and sexual abuse are no higher than false allegations for other crimes, such as burglary (USA 2 per cent; UK 3 per cent),³⁸ and the rate of conviction for reported child abuse cases is only 3–4 per cent.³⁹ This means that 93 per cent of reported sexual abuse cases result in no conviction and yet the victim has not made up the allegation.</p> <p>The causes for this attrition between reporting and conviction include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the age of the alleged victim at the time of the offence and the time that has elapsed between the offence and the trial; (ii) the lack of support for the victim during the criminal process, which causes her/him to withdraw the allegation; (iii) the fact that it is often one person’s word against another’s, when again the age of the alleged victim becomes crucial; (iv) police have a very poor record of investigating sexual offences, often failing to gather sufficient evidence or follow up on evidence provided (Kelly); (v) the CPS will look at the chances of securing a conviction and undertake a cost/benefit analysis before sending a case for trial; (vi) the burden is on the prosecution to prove ‘beyond all reasonable doubt’ that the alleged offence took place; (vii) where the alleged abuser is an upstanding member of the community and the alleged victim has struggled to cope with life as a result of child sexual abuse, often the defence will present the alleged victim as unstable and/or otherwise not a credible witness. <p>Just because no charges are brought by the CPS following an allegation being made, or a person is found not guilty of an offence following a trial, this does not automatically mean that the allegation is false. At all times listeners and those responding within church communities should keep an open mind and exercise great caution.</p>
---	---

³⁸ Kelly et al., *A Gap or a Chasm?*

³⁹ Kelly et al., *A Gap or a Chasm?*

C3 Mental health information

Counselling and psychotherapy – what's the difference?

Both counselling and psychotherapy provide people with a way of dealing with psychological change and provide support. There can be considerable overlap in both the issues addressed and the methods used.

Counselling

- Counselling helps people to identify problems and encourages them to take positive steps to resolve these issues.
- Counselling is the best course of therapeutic treatment for anyone who already has an understanding of well-being, and who is also able to resolve problems.
- Counselling will enable a person to explore personal development and to create adjustments.
- A counsellor will be a trained person and will have a supervisor where some issues will be shared for guidance.
- There are several forms of counselling and these may include person-centred, integrative, marital, sexual, bereavement, BRIEF, Cognitive Behavioural Treatment etc.
- Many counsellors will be accredited with BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy) or ACC (Association of Christian Counsellors) and/or be members of an affiliated group. See Appendix C7 – Further resources.

Psychotherapy

- Psychotherapy tends to address more deep-seated problems, which may have roots in very early childhood experiences.
- Psychotherapy will help a person to understand feelings, thoughts and actions more clearly, often by exploration of their childhood, feelings, thoughts and actions.
- As psychotherapy tends to take longer, a commitment to regular sessions becomes important.
- A psychotherapist will have clinical supervision where issues will be shared for guidance.
- A psychotherapist will normally have been to therapy themselves for several years. A psychotherapist may have a particular theoretical background such as Jungian or Humanist/Integrative or Constructivist. The training is lengthy and a therapist will be accredited by and be a member of UKCP (United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy). See Appendix C7 – Further resources.

Dissociation

Dissociation can be commonly experienced by survivors of sexual abuse in *varying degrees*. It is a defence mechanism helping people to survive traumatic experiences. Occasional mild episodes are part of ordinary life. They can occur at the time of a one-off trauma or during the identity confusion of adolescence. A brief outline of the five types of dissociation is as follows:

Dissociative disorders

This is when an individual has persistent and repeated episodes of dissociation. They usually cause internal chaos and may interfere with everyday life, although some people can apparently still function, so hiding their distress.

Dissociative amnesia

An inability to remember significant personal information and/or particular periods of time that cannot be explained by ordinary forgetfulness.

Dissociative fugue

During a temporary loss of identity, a person travels to a new location. They may assume a different identity and new life. There is severe amnesia, with moderate to severe identity confusion and often identity alteration.

Depersonalization disorder

A person has strong feelings of detachment from their body or that it is unreal. It can also include out-of-body experiences, such as seeing yourself as if watching a movie.

Dissociative identity disorder (DID)

This is the most complex and is also known as multiple personality disorder. The defining feature is severe identity alteration. An individual experiences shifts of identity as separate personalities. Each identity may assume control of behaviour and thoughts at different times.

Management of memory and disclosure

Telling stories and making disclosures about ourselves and our experiences is part of an ongoing process that occurs in our everyday interactions. This narrative is associated with identity, which gives meaning to lives.

For those who have experienced sexual abuse, the story is an organic, evolving and non-linear narrative. They may have told of their experience once, and made an initial disclosure, but this does not mean that their story is complete. Initially it may seem incoherent. It is likely to evolve and change as the person pieces together information; gains new insights and understanding of their experience(s). Fear of repercussion or being disbelieved can affect the way a person communicates their experience.

For each person different things will trigger memories. (These triggers cannot always be identified.) Sometimes this will lead to a person having flashbacks.

These memories can feel real as if the event is happening now. This can be distressing and it will not always be possible to communicate what is happening.

Responding well in these situations means staying calm, talking to the person, using their name, reminding them that they are safe and that what they have experienced are memories.

Touch may not be appropriate. Allow the individual to guide as to the next steps.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

PTSD can result from accident, disaster, war, torture, kidnap, threat as well as abuse. It can arise from a one-off event or an accumulation of incidents. PTSD is a natural reaction to a deeply shocking and disturbing experience, that is, a *normal* reaction to a very abnormal situation. The more disturbing the experience, the more likely a person is to develop PTSD. About 97 per cent⁴⁰ of people who have been sexually abused are likely to suffer from PTSD.

The traumatic event(s) can be re-experienced in any or all of the following ways:

- recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts or perceptions;
- hypersensitivity to catastrophe generally;
- recurrent distressing dreams of the event;
- acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (for example, reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociated flashback episodes);
- a bewildering sense of detachment;
- inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma;
- a diminished interest or participation in significant activities;
- intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event;
- difficulty falling or staying asleep;
- irritability or outbursts of anger;
- difficulty concentrating;
- restricted feelings and range of affect (for example, unable to have loving feelings);
- experiencing a sense of a foreshortened future or a hypersensitivity to potential disaster or catastrophe;
- inability to put emotions into words;
- feeling suicidal;
- becoming more willing to take risks.

The symptoms of PTSD usually appear within six months of a traumatic event and can include feeling grief-stricken, depressed, anxious, guilty and angry. There are three main types of symptoms:

⁴⁰ B. van Kolk, A. McFarlane and L. Weisaeth (eds), *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body and Society*, Guildford Press, 1996.

Flashbacks and nightmares

Reliving the event, again and again. This can happen both as a ‘flashback’ in the day and as nightmares when asleep. These can be so realistic that feeling the emotion and physical sensations of what happened – fear, sweating, smells, sounds, pain – occurs.

Avoidance and numbing

It can be just too upsetting to relive an experience. A person may deal with the pain of feelings by trying to feel nothing at all – by becoming emotionally numb, by communicating less with other people. This is hard for others to understand.

Being ‘on guard’

Staying alert all the time, as if looking out for danger. Believing that similar things will happen again. Finding it hard to relax. This is called ‘hypervigilance’. A person will also feel anxious and find it difficult to sleep, and be ‘jumpy’ and irritable.

The emotional reactions to PTSD, and stress in general, can be accompanied by:

- muscle aches and pains
- diarrhoea
- irregular heartbeats
- headaches
- feelings of panic and fear
- depression
- drinking too much alcohol
- using drugs (including painkillers).

In responding well

Do encourage the person . . .

- to talk to someone they trust about what happened;
- to practise relaxation exercises;
- to eat and exercise regularly;
- to take time to be with others where they feel supported.

Do advise the person . . .

- to drive with care – concentration may be poor;
- to speak to a specialist counsellor or doctor – treatment is very successful;
- to keep life as normal as possible;
- to get back to a usual routine as far as possible;
- that she/he should not expect the memories to go away immediately;
- and that he/she should expect to get better.

Do not . . .

- get angry with a person – PTSD symptoms are not a sign of weakness, they are a normal reaction, of normal people, to terrifying experiences;
- advise them to bottle up feelings;
- avoid talking about it;
- expect too much of the person – s/he has to adjust to what has happened;
- avoid him/her – they need you!

It is important to remember that a person cannot change or forget what has happened, but they can learn to think differently about it, about the world, and about life. They will need to be able to remember what happened, as fully as possible, without being overwhelmed by fear and distress. This will take time. Encourage them to seek professional help to enable this to begin to take place.

C4 Ritual and cultural abuse

Ritual abuse

Satanic ritual and some forms of witchcraft involve abuse and torture as part of the worship of Satan or other deities. Different orders, cults and covens emphasize different aspects and may go to differing degrees in pursuing their beliefs.

Some ritual abuse is very violent and sexually extreme. Some involves ongoing generations from the same family (from early childhood). It is difficult to have any clear indication of the extent of organized and ritual abuse due to the strongly secretive nature of many cults, the high level of control and also the fear of the participants and victims. However, a number of commentators indicate that most towns and cities have cults or covens. There is also some evidence of widespread activity in rural areas, with many villages having people who are members.

The core reasons why people may be involved in ritual abuse are:

- they believe in it;
- it meets a need (gratification, addiction etc.);
- through entrapment;
- they have been brought up in a family where there is involvement.

Survivors coming out of ritualistic abusing cults can often suffer with the symptoms of complex post traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD) and dissociative disorders (including dissociative identity disorder, DID). Most are afraid to talk about their experiences and also find it difficult to get help through the health services. Disbelief, denial and misdiagnosis all add to the challenges that a survivor faces in recovering from the symptoms and trauma they have experienced.

Many will turn to the Church, voluntary organizations or private counsellors for assistance that is not otherwise available. There are now a number of organizations in the UK who have experience of working with survivors of ritual abuse or who can provide support to churches, in particular the Trauma Abuse Group (TAG) (see Appendix C7 – Further resources).

It is important to remember that the belief system of Satanism and some other ritual abuse settings are an inversion of Christianity. This means that many signs, symbols and rituals of the Church can be a trigger for survivors, and this in turn makes it difficult for them to participate in many aspects of church life and worship.

However, with sound therapeutic help and good support, the prognosis for recovery for survivors is usually good, if somewhat long term. Awareness, understanding and great sensitivity along with sound professional advice will greatly aid the journey of recovery.

Abuse with a cultural element

Child exploitation – child trafficking

According to ECPAT UK,⁴¹ every year 1.2 million children around the world are victims of trafficking. There is evidence that within the UK, children are predominately trafficked from West or Central Africa, Eastern Europe and South East Asia.

UNICEF UK has estimated that some 250 children have been trafficked into the UK over a five-year period to 2003.

Trafficking is not always for criminal exploitation; it can purely be for a child to receive what is perceived to be a better life or education. Trafficking is often linked to ‘private fostering’.

Trafficking of women, men and children

Home Office research estimates that in 2003 there were up to 4,000 women in the UK who had been trafficked for sexual exploitation (UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking 2007). There are many reasons why parents place their children into private fostering arrangements. Such arrangements are subject to national minimum standards, which are available on the website www.everychildmatters.gov.uk (see Appendix C7 – Further resources).

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

The practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) is centuries old; worldwide it affects more than 120 million women, and an estimated 2 million girls are circumcised each year.

It is common to certain traditions and cultural beliefs, and where it is still practised incidents are more commonly found among their faith communities. It is particularly difficult for the statutory authorities to investigate this offence because of the age of the victims/survivors and the family setting.

The procedures are mostly done outside of the UK in unsanitary conditions by people without formal medical training, which can lead to serious infection and death. The peak age for female victims is between 10 and 12 years, although it can happen to all ages through to adulthood.

Children accused of witchcraft or needing deliverance/exorcism

Over recent years there have been several high-profile criminal cases in the UK involving child cruelty associated with witchcraft and spirit possession. These include cases of children receiving severe beatings, sexual abuse, torture and even murder. Victoria Climbié is one such case. The blend of faith and traditional practices has led to a number of children being at risk in the UK. Some places of worship might believe that a child can have an evil spirit or is possessed when he or she displays behavioural problems or is different in some way. Actions arising from this might well be abusive.

⁴¹ ECPAT UK stands for ‘End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes’; see www.ecpat.org.uk – also Appendix C7 – Further resources.

Forced marriage

There are clear differences between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. An arranged marriage has families of both spouses involved and the choice to accept the arrangement remains with the individuals. A forced marriage is one where at least one party doesn't consent and some element of coercion is involved.

Forced marriage is primarily an issue of violence against women. Most cases involve young women and girls aged between 13 and 30 years, although there is evidence to suggest some victims are male.

Parents who force their children to marry often justify their behaviour as protecting their children, building stronger families and preserving cultural or religious traditions.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office in conjunction with the Home Office has issued guidance and operates a Helpline and specialist unit (see Appendix C7 – Further resources).

C5 Theological reflection

The Hebrew Scriptures reveal a God who values all and cares for the needy, the outcast, the alien and the exiled. The Gospels introduce us to Jesus – God incarnate – so often moving among those who were outcasts through disease or lifestyle, and whose lives were transformed by that contact. Here was one who, moved with compassion, touched lepers and welcomed the touch of a woman who was ceremonially unclean. By so doing he affirmed that in God’s sight everyone is valued and no one is beyond his love.

The account of the healing of a lame man at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5.1–10) provides a useful context for exploring theological issues relating to the experience of those who have been sexually abused. Here Jesus finds a man who has come to a place where he might expect and indeed clearly hopes to receive healing and deliverance from his condition. That he remains impaired and unable to enjoy life relates to the fact that he has no one to help him and so others push before him.

Many victims of sexual abuse have hoped to find a safe place within our churches, to find sympathy and support, and assistance in processing what has happened to them to a point where they find justice and a degree of recovery. The Church has the opportunity to become both the place where recovery should be possible, and the friend who will assist the disabled to the point where that recovery becomes actual experience.

Sadly, for many victims of abuse their experience does not fulfil their hopes or expectations. In the time of Christ it was not uncommon for those with such impairments to be treated as of less value, and even to presume that their condition was somehow their own fault. Similarly, ignorance and embarrassment over sexual issues on the part of many in our churches leave many victims within our communities so close to recovery and yet so far.

The presence of Jesus at the Pool brought about a compassionate dialogue that led to the deliverance for which the lame man longed. His status, his life and his future were changed through his engagement with the one whose life fully expressed the character of God.

While God is present and at work in his world, a Church that is truly empowered by the Holy Spirit will especially be a place where the wonderful character of God is manifested. We are called to witness to that truth. All our actions and reactions should reflect the character of God. We are called to affirmative intervention on the part of the oppressed, the marginalized and the victims of injustice.

Many who have been the victims of sexual abuse feel disabled not so much by their experience as by how others respond or by how they fear others will respond. To put their experiences into words is painful. And as they know it is hard to tell, so they also understand that it is hard to hear.⁴² Tragically, if and

⁴² *Time For Action*, chapter 5, ‘It’s Hard to Hear but Harder to Tell’ and chapter 6, ‘Listening Well to What’s Hard to Tell’.

when they find the courage to relate those experiences, all too often they find that through ignorance the response not only falls short of what they need but can actually add to the pain and hurt they have already suffered. The stories need to be heard. The first step on the road to recovery for the lame man was the readiness for someone to discuss his situation with him.

Hearing alone is not enough. Justice is as important as compassion. Far too often survivors of sexual abuse find an unsympathetic hearing. Worse still, for them, those who caused the abuse have historically found refuge within our churches. Such actions compound the sense of injustice that many feel. We need to understand and then apply the actions that enable those impaired by abuse to find recovery.

Both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament make it clear that it is incumbent upon the people of God to show compassion towards the vulnerable, weak and needy within society. It is a thread that runs throughout the Scriptures. Micah's declaration of what the Lord expects, the story of the Good Samaritan, the comments of James about the worthlessness of words without deeds, are just three among many helpful passages.⁴³

Many who have endured sexual abuse feel that mercy towards those who have sinned is currently set above the need for the victims to have an advocate who will ensure that they can find justice. Nowhere is this clearer than in the extraordinary way in which so many are more passionate regarding possible wrongful accusation than they are towards the person alleging a life-shattering event. Even more common is the experience of finding those feelings of false guilt compounded by poor counselling on the subject of forgiveness. To encourage victims to forgive where there is no effort to act on their behalf to hold the abuser to account is a gross form of injustice. The next section (Appendix C6) explores this in more detail.

We can do better. In creating humankind in his likeness God designed us to live in community. When one suffers we all suffer. We are all made poorer by every incidence of sexual abuse. In finding the grace to act righteously towards those who suffer, we also experience transformation through grace. We become better people and our churches become better places. Perhaps they will truly become places where healing and wholeness can be found, a place that is an enabling 'friend' to those in need.

⁴³ Micah 6.8; Luke 10.25–37; James 1.10–27.

C6 The issue of forgiveness

Forgive

1. to cease to blame or hold resentment against (someone or something)
2. to grant pardon for (a mistake, wrongdoing etc.)
3. to free or pardon (someone) from penalty
4. to free from the obligation of (a debt, payment etc.)

Of course, forgiveness is at the heart of the gospel. Love is willing to forgive, but also holds the sinner to account. Mercy and justice have to go hand in hand. While the withholding of forgiveness to the penitent is wrong, it is also wrong when victims of abuse are encouraged to forgive without any attempt being made to hold the perpetrator to account.

Obviously, in situations in which the abuser is no longer alive or is unknown, it is impossible to hold such a person to account. But otherwise offering forgiveness to an abuser without holding him/her to account is wrong for several reasons:

- Left unaccountable the abuser is very likely to repeat the behaviour and others might be at risk. Where this happens the forgiving person is likely to suffer a sense of guilt for contributing to the subsequent abuse.
- Where there has been no acceptance of responsibility on the part of the abuser nor any expression of contrition, then the abused person is left with a feeling of incompleteness or lack of closure. To try to process forgiveness before this has been obtained might hinder the abused person from moving on.
- The abuser needs to be made fully aware of the wrongness of his/her actions, including where they are criminal, along with the harm caused to their victim(s).
- The abuser needs to understand and properly address the cognitive elements that led to the abuse.
- There is a moral societal obligation to prosecute someone who has committed such a crime.

Often, within a church context, those who have disclosed that they have been sexually abused have been urged to forgive unconditionally as if this is the righteous thing to do. Worse still, some Christian leaders have even explicitly or implicitly suggested serious shortcoming when a victim of abuse, deprived of justice, has not been able to forgive his/her abuser. Such bad practice reflects poor theology, and is yet another form of abuse.

There is often an assumption that survivors are somehow failing in their faith if they have anger towards their abusers. It is assumed that if they are still angry, they have not forgiven their abusers. This needs some further consideration. It is possible to forgive someone for cutting off your leg but doing this does not take away the physical pain or the discomfort and inconvenience of learning to

manage with one leg. So even if forgiving the abuser, the victim/survivor still has to manage the physical and emotional sequelae of the abuse.

Some of the emotional injuries may not manifest or perhaps cannot manifest until the survivor reaches a particular age, or until sexual activity becomes part of their physical and emotional development. What the survivor is coping with is not primarily the difficulty of forgiving the offender but the difficulties of managing pain in the physical, emotional and psychological demands of everyday life and most particularly in close, intimate relationships.

It can be helpful to remember that forgiveness is a process. Someone who has suffered traumatic abuse is unlikely to immediately forgive completely, and may never reach that point in their lives. Wanting to forgive, or even wanting to be able to want to forgive, is itself the beginning of the process of forgiving.

Furthermore, there is a difference between forgiveness being offered and forgiveness being received. Someone who has suffered abuse may reach a point of being able to forgive the person who has caused that abuse. Whether or not that person is able to receive the forgiveness offered is a quite different question and will depend upon their repentance, which will need to include remorse, appropriate restitution and a resolution not to offend again.

Even if the victim has forgiven the offender, there is still much to do in attending to the effects of the abuse. There can be a presumption that once the victim has forgiven the abuser, all is well. There is no consideration given to the effects and consequences of the abuse. Indeed, such effects have not been widely known or acknowledged, even by those who have been abused. They are of course wide ranging and cover physical, mental, emotional, cognitive and spiritual aspects.

Additionally, there can be an implicit expectation that *forgiving is forgetting*, that is, if an offender is forgiven, the resultant injury is also forgotten. This is faulty logic. A survivor can choose to forgive but cannot choose to forget: the activities are located in different spheres of human control. A person may wish to forget but they cannot choose to forget – this leads to repression with its concomitant consequences.

The belief that forgiving leads to, or should lead to, forgetting is widely held, albeit unconsciously, by many people including those who have been abused. Therefore, a survivor who has forgiven an offender can be somewhat bewildered when there is unresolved anger, grief, sadness and guilt and perhaps inability to relate satisfactorily in an intimate relationship. Wholeness and healing is not achieved through ‘forgiveness’ alone, even when a survivor feels able to forgive. The journey of recovery is far longer and more complex than any simplistic notion of ‘forgiving and forgetting’.

It is worth remembering that even Jesus did not himself forgive his executioners, but asked God to do so.

Time for Action, p. 126

C7 Further resources

A selection of useful websites, organizations and their contact details, listed in alphabetical order:

www.acc-uk.org – The Association of Christian Counsellors' (ACC) mission statement is to facilitate provision by Christians of quality counselling and pastoral care. Its functions include providing nationwide standards for Christian counselling and care. It also provides a nationwide system for the accreditation of Christian counsellors broadly acceptable to Christian churches, counselling organizations and the wider community. It is a body that represents Christian counsellors and develops relations with institutions such as the social services and health authorities, and with denominations and professional bodies. It encourages, trains and resources pastoral carers and Christian counsellors.

29 Momus Boulevard
Coventry
CV2 5NA

Tel: 0845 124 9569/0845 124 9570

www.afruca.org – AFRUCA – Africans Unite Against Child Abuse (UK) is an organization concerned about cruelty against the African child.

AFRUCA
Unit 3D/F Leroy House
436 Essex Road
London
N1 3QP

Tel: 0844 660 8607

www.bacp.co.uk – The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) works with large and small organizations within the sector, including advising schools on how to set up a counselling service, assisting the NHS on service provision, working with voluntary agencies and supporting independent practitioners. BACP also participates in the development of counselling and psychotherapy at an international level.

BACP House
15 St John's Business Park
Lutterworth
LE17 4HB

Tel: 01455 883300

Email: enquiries@bacp.co.uk

www.churchsafe.org.uk – The Churches Agency for Safeguarding's (CAS) mission is to support Christian churches and organizations to maintain a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults by providing an efficient Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure support service, offering

safeguarding information and advice and influencing public policy on behalf of its members.

Churches' Agency for Safeguarding
25 Marylebone Road
London
NW1 5JR

Tel: 020 7467 5216
Email: cas@methodistchurch.org.uk

www.ccpas.co.uk – The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) is an independent Christian charity providing professional advice, CRB online and paper disclosure checks (CRB/ISA/AccessNI), support, training and resources in all areas of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and for those affected by abuse throughout the UK.

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)
PO Box 133
Swanley
Kent
BR8 7UQ

Tel: 0845 120 4550
Email: info@ccpas.co.uk

www.ceop.police.uk – The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre is dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children. It is part of UK policing, tracking and bringing offenders to account either directly or in partnership with local and international forces.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
33 Vauxhall Bridge Road
London
SW1V 2WG

Tel: 0870 000 3344

www.chimat.org.uk/camhs – The National CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) Support Service (NCSS) is commissioned as a national service improvement and development programme by the Department of Health and the Department for Education. Its purpose is to ensure that children's psychological health and well-being services are effectively commissioned and provided by local services in England. The website contains useful information resources, initiatives and organizations to keep people up to date with current policy and good practice. It is aimed at professionals from health, local authority and the voluntary sector.

www.dabsbooks.co.uk – Specialist book and information service for people who are overcoming childhood abuse, sexual abuse or domestic violence, and for those who live and work with them.

www.ecpat.org.uk – ECPAT UK – End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. ECPAT UK is active in research campaigning and lobbying government to prevent child exploitation and protect children in tourism and child victims of trafficking.

ECPAT UK
Grosvenor Gardens House
35–37 Grosvenor Gardens
London
SW1W 0BS

Tel: 020 7233 9887
Email: info@ecpat.org.uk

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk and
www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople – Please note that the Every Child Matters website has now been archived to the National Archives website. All relevant information from the Every Child Matters site has been placed on the children and young people section of the Department of Education website.

www.faithtrustinstitute.org – The FaithTrust Institute is a multi-faith, multi-cultural training and educational organization with global reach, working to end sexual and domestic violence. Founded in 1977 by the Revd Dr Marie M. Fortune, the FaithTrust Institute offers a wide range of services and resources, including training, consulting and educational materials.

Seattle Office
FaithTrust Institute
2400 N 45th Street Suite 101
Seattle, WA 98103
USA

Durham Office
FaithTrust Institute
123 W Main Street Suite 700
Durham, NC 27701
USA

www.firstpersonplural.org.uk – First Person Plural is a small UK-wide registered charity led by abuse survivors with first-hand experience of complex dissociative distress.

First Person Plural
PO Box 2537
Wolverhampton
WV4 4ZL
United Kingdom

Email: fpp@firstpersonplural.org.uk

www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/ – The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint initiative between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Home Office. Abroad, the FMU

works with embassy staff to rescue individuals who may have been held captive, raped, forced into a marriage or into having an abortion. In the UK, the FMU assists actual and potential victims of forced marriage, as well as professionals working in the social, educational and health sectors.

Tel: 020 7008 0151

Email: fmu@fco.gov.uk

www.izzyspromise.org.uk – Izzy’s Promise is a charity organization based in Dundee, Scotland that offers free and confidential support services to: ritual/organized abuse survivors; refugees; asylum seekers; ethnic minorities and people trafficked via rituals.

Izzy’s Promise

1 Victoria Road

Dundee

DD1 1EL

Tel: 01382 206222

www.kidscape.org.uk – Kidscape works UK-wide to provide individuals and organizations with practical skills and resources necessary to keep children safe from harm (specifically to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse).

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens

London

SW1W 0DH

Tel: 020 7730 3300

Fax: 020 7730 7081

Helpline: 08451 205 204 (Please note that the helpline is for the use of parents, guardians or concerned relatives and friends of bullied children.)

www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation (LFF) is a child protection charity committed to reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. LFF’s staff work with adult male and female sexual abusers; young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours; victims of abuse and other family members.

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation

Bordesley Hall

The Holloway

Alvechurch

Birmingham

B48 7QA

Tel: 01527 591922

Fax: 01527 591924

Email: bordesley@lucyfaithfull.org

www.macsas.org.uk – Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors – MACSAS is a support group for women and men from Christian backgrounds who have been sexually abused by ministers or clergy, as children or as adults. It provides support for survivors who have remained within their Christian communities and for those who have left.

MACSAS
PO Box 46933
London
E8 1XA

www.napac.org.uk – The National Association for People Abused in Childhood – NAPAC is a registered charity, based in the UK, providing support and information for people abused in childhood.

NAPAC
PO Box 63632
London
SW9 1BF

Tel: (Support Line) 0800 085 3330

www.nspcc.org.uk – The NSPCC also provides a free useful library and information service, which provides regular updates to subscribers. It is entitled ‘Current Awareness Service for Practice, Policy and Research’. The Barnados website also contains useful material and links (www.barnados.org.uk).

If you think that a child is in immediate danger please **dial 999**. If you are a child who needs help, please call Childline (www.childline.org.uk) on **0800 11 11**.

Alternatively, please call **0808 800 5000** to discuss your concerns with the NSPCC 24-Hour Child Protection Helpline.

www.oneinfour.org.uk – One in Four offers a voice to and support for people who have experienced sexual abuse and sexual violence.

OneinFour
219 Bromley Road
Bellingham
Catford
SE6 2PG

Tel: 020 8697 2112
Email: admin@oneinfour.org.uk

www.pods-online.org.uk – For Partners of Dissociative Survivors (PODS) is a separate organization supported by First Person Plural. It offers a service specifically for partners of dissociative survivors of sexual or physical abuse. This includes (but is not limited to) those who have dissociative identity disorder (DID), whether formally diagnosed or not.

PO Box 633
Huntingdon
PE29 9GJ

Tel: 01480 878409/07746 799221
Email: info@pods-online.org.uk

www.psychotherapy.org.uk – UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) is a membership organization with over 75 training and listing organizations, and over 6,600 individual practitioners. UKCP holds the national register of psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors. UKCP produces publications and runs meetings and conferences to inform and consult on issues of concern to practitioners and to support continuing professional development. UKCP works to improve access to psychological therapies, to support and disseminate research, to improve standards, and also deals with complaints against organizational members as well as individual members.

www.sexualabusesurvivors.com – Sexual abuse survivors are a group of individuals who have had their ability to enjoy sexuality as a sacred, life-enhancing experience violated as a result of sexual abuse. As sexual abuse survivors, they let the power of the group help them heal what they refer to as ‘The Split’ (‘The Split is our tendency to disassociate from our bodies during the sexual act’).

www.stopitnow.org.uk – Stop it Now! UK and Ireland is a campaign, managed by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, which aims to prevent child sexual abuse by raising awareness and encouraging early recognition and responses to the problem by abusers themselves and those close to them. Stop it Now! believes sexual abuse is preventable and urges abusers and potential abusers to seek help and gives adults the information they need to protect children effectively. Stop it Now! encourages adults to create a society that no longer tolerates the sexual abuse of children.

Tel: (Helpline) 0808 1000 900
Email: help@stopitnow.org.uk

www.tag-uk.net – The Trauma and Abuse Group (TAG) is a group studying and supporting work concerning trauma, abuse and dissociation. The group exists to provide information, support, training, encouragement and networking for counsellors, therapists, professional workers, carers and indeed anyone who is concerned or interested and any that are working with individuals who have suffered trauma and abuse.

The Trauma and Abuse Group
The Willows Centre
11 Prospect Place
Swindon
SN1 3LQ

Books and publications referenced in this guidance

- C. Ainscough and K. Toon, *Breaking Free: Help for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, Sheldon Press, 2000.
- M. Argyle, *Psychology and Religion: An Introduction*, Routledge, 2000.
- P. Cawson et al., *Child Maltreatment in the United Kingdom: A Study of the Prevalence of Child Abuse and Neglect*, NSPCC, 2000.
- J. Chevous, *From Silence to Sanctuary: A Guide to Understanding, Preventing and Responding to Abuse*, SPCK, 2005.
- Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin, 2009.
- M. Elliott (ed.), *Female Sexual Abuse of Children: The Ultimate Taboo*, Longman, 1993.
- M. Fortune, *Clergy Misconduct: Sexual Abuse in the Ministerial Relationship*, FaithTrust Institute, 2009.
- M. Fortune, *Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse*, Harper Collins, 1995.
- J. L. Henman, *Trauma and Recovery*, Harper Collins, 1992.
- E. Kelly, J. Lovett and L. Regan, *A Gap or a Chasm? Attrition in Reported Rape Cases*, Home Office Research Study 293, CWAS Unit, London Metropolitan University, 2005.
- M. Kennedy, 'Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors', MACSAS Conference paper, 2009.
- K. Pargament, *The Psychology of Religion and Coping*, Guildford Press, 1997.
- P. M. Sullivan and J. F. Knutson, 'Maltreatment and Disabilities: A Population-based Epidemiological Study', *Child Abuse and Neglect*, Volume 24, Issue 10, 2000.
- Peter Thomason, 'Review of Sex Offender Treatment Programmes', *Community Care*, March 2009.
- Time for Action: Sexual Abuse, the Churches and a New Dawn for Survivors*, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 2002.
- S. E. Ullman, 'Social Reactions to Child Sexual Abuse Disclosures: A Critical Review', *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, Volume 12, Issue 1, 2003, pp. 89–121.
- B. van Kolk, A. McFarlane and L. Weisaeth, *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body and Society*, Guildford Press, 1996.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2010.
(www.education.gov.uk/publications//eOrderingDownload/00305-2010DOM-EN.PDF)

Working Together specifically addresses:

Sections 6.14–6.19 Female Genital Mutilation

Sections 6.20–6.31 Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence

Sections 6.49–6.53 Child Abuse Linked to Belief in ‘Spirit Possession’

Sections 6.54–6.66 Child Victims of Trafficking

Sections 10.9–10.13 Race, Ethnicity and Culture

C8 Acknowledgements

With grateful thanks for the contributions provided for the working group by:

Simon Bass
Chief Executive, CCPAS

Mike Fisher
Chair of TAG

and

Margaret Kennedy
MACSAS

And a very special acknowledgement of the contribution made by all members of the working group:

The Revd Barry Osbourne
Congregational Federation, co-author of *Time for Action* (2002)

Canon Carolyn Buckeridge
Child Protection Adviser for the Diocese of Bristol. Carolyn's private counselling practice includes survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Kate Prendergast
Lecturer in Social Work, Brunel University; former team leader of a Children and Families Social Work team. Member of the Justice and Peace Commission, Westminster Diocese

Anne Lawrence
Survivor and chair of MACSAS

Karen Bowden
Survivor of abuse (Diocese of Oxford).

Elaine Rose
Safeguarding Adviser for the Diocese of Canterbury and psychotherapist

Peter Gibbs
Anglican Parish Priest (Poole, Diocese of Salisbury)

Canon Elizabeth Ingram
Co-author of *Time for Action* (2002), trainer for voluntary organizations in child protection

Stephen York and Judith Egar
Legal Advisers, Church of England

Yvonne Criddle
Safeguarding Diversity Officer, Church of England

Pearl Luxon and Elizabeth Hall
Safeguarding Advisers, Church of England and the Methodist Church of Great Britain

