

Parish Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

Parish of St Stephen's and St Wulstan's Selly Park

agreed by the Parish Church Council on 19th March 2024.

**All forms of domestic abuse are wrong
and must stop.**

We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:

- Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse;
- Protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm;
- Recognise equality amongst people and within relationships;
- Enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

We recognise that:

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

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:

In all our activities – valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

In our teaching - recognising the prevalence of domestic abuse and the damage it causes we will uphold biblical standards of mutual love and respect within families, households and marriages.

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

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

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

In our training of leaders within the church – make clear the responsibility of those who suspect domestic abuse, where children or vulnerable adults are concerned, to report this to the relevant authorities, including either the parish safeguarding officer or the diocesan safeguarding officer – in situations where no children or vulnerable adults are involved, to recognise the need to listen carefully to the victim, to record details of conversations in case further action is required and to support them in the action they wish to take. If someone is in immediate physical danger to support them in moving to a place of safety.

**If you have any concerns or need to talk to anyone
please contact:**

Helen Buckley – Parish safeguarding coordinator

Steph Haynes - Bishop's safeguarding advisor

Helen Hobbs -Parish Domestic Abuse contact

Other Useful Contacts:

Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser	07342 993 844
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid	0808 800 0028
West Mercia Women's Aid	0800 980 3331
Staffordshire Women's Aid	0870 2700 123
Black Country Women's Aid	0121 552 6448
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327
Galop (LGBT)	0800 999 5428
Action on Elder Abuse	0808 808 8141