



Safer Recruitment Policy

March 12th 2025

Policy & procedures

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this policy:

- The term ‘Benefice’ is used to denote the three churches of Creech St. Michael, Ruishton & Thornfalcon jointly, plus the incumbent.
- The term ‘Parish’ is used to denote an individual PCC plus the incumbent, who together are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented.

The Benefice recognises the importance of its ministry to children, young people and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to its care.

As part of its mission, the Benefice is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all children and youth workers (employed or voluntary) and those working with vulnerable adults within the Benefice.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents and carers.
- Supporting those in the Benefice affected by abuse.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities and other organisations.

BENEFICE POLICY

The Benefice recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and vulnerable adults and follows the principles laid down in the *Benefice Safeguarding Policy*. It acknowledges that children and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual, emotional, financial or spiritual abuse, and neglect. The Benefice has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter “the policy”) in order that recruitment of volunteers and paid workers is carried out safely and in line with Diocesan Safe Recruitment Guidelines. This policy reflects these guidelines, whilst also being tailored to our needs in the Benefice. (See also the Benefice policy: *Safeguarding of Children and Adults*). The Benefice will abide by the Diocese of Bath and Wells’ policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders (Appendix J)

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS: PROCEDURE

- The following procedure applies to anyone volunteering or applying for any role involving work with children, young people or vulnerable adults in the Benefice.
- The appropriate team leader will inform the Benefice Safeguarding Officer that a volunteer has come forward.
- All volunteers will be provided with the opportunity to 'visit' a role for a period of 2 months (they should visit at least twice in this period).
- At the end of the 2 month 'visiting' period, the volunteer will meet with the relevant team leader and the Benefice Safeguarding Officer to ensure that the applicant is fully aware of the responsibilities of the role and the Safeguarding policy and practices of the Benefice and that an objective assessment of the applicant's ability to meet the job description can be made.
- At this meeting, the volunteer will be provided with an up-to-date job description for the role (See Appendix E for pro forma). The volunteer and team leader will sign a copy of the job description – this will be held on file by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer.
- For all roles, the eligibility of the role for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (with or without Barring List check) will be determined (Appendices A, B and C) and, if required, a DBS application will be completed using the online application service. Identity documents will be verified by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent and the information submitted to the Diocesan Safeguarding office for checking and forwarding to the DBS. No applicant will commence their employment until the DBS check is completed and the Safeguarding Officer has been informed of the outcome of the DBS check. Depending on the outcome, the applicant may or may not be able to join the team they have volunteered for. The minimum age for a DBS check is 16.
- Once the Benefice Safeguarding Officer has been informed that the DBS check has been successfully completed, they will inform the volunteer's team leader. Only then may the volunteer take up their position and commence work.
- The exception to the above occurs if the applicant has a previous DBS disclosure, they have registered with the Update Service and have given permission for the Diocese of Bath and Wells to use this service to check their clearance to work with Children and Young People and/or Vulnerable Adults.
- DBS checks will be required to be updated after 3 years (unless registering with the Update service, when the Diocese will ask for permission to access the person's DBS information on the Update service).
- If a role requires a DBS check, a Confidential Declaration form must also be completed (Appendix D)

- All details of DBS checks, Confidential Declarations forms etc. are stored securely with access to these only possible by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the incumbent. An up-to-date record sheet detailing those with current checks and the dates of expiry will be kept in the Benefice office, again with access only made available to the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the incumbent.
- All volunteers will be required to complete a short registration form (Appendix F). This will include contact details for the volunteer and, if the role meets DBS requirements, the name of two referees willing to provide references.
- If references are required, these will be requested and held on file by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer (Appendices G and H).
- A copy of the Safe Recruitment record (Appendix K) will be held, along with all relevant paperwork, securely by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer.

YOUNG HELPERS

- Young people under the age of 16 who wish to volunteer to help at Benefice events where children and/or young people are present are welcomed.
- The Team Leader and the Safeguarding Officer will discuss the responsibilities of the role with the young person and their parents/carers and the young person will be invited to visit the role at least twice over a 2-month period.
- If the young person wishes to continue to volunteer then (s)he, his/her parents/carers and the Team Leader will agree and sign a three-way agreement (Appendix I) in which the young person acknowledges their understanding of the role and agrees to safeguard the well-being of vulnerable children and young people; parents/carers give their permission for the young person to be a volunteer; and the team leader agrees to support the volunteer in the volunteer role.

RECRUITMENT OF PAID EMPLOYEES: PROCEDURE

- If the appointment is an officially advertised role, all applications received should be scrutinised in a systematic way before sending invitations to interview. All appropriate checks will be undertaken, including references, before interview. A face-to-face interview will be conducted with the applicant(s) based on an objective assessment of the applicants' ability to meet the job description and person specification. The interview panel should include the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and at least two others. The successful applicant will be informed that the offer of employment is conditional on receiving satisfactory information from all necessary checks, including Disclosure and Barring Service check, where appropriate.
- For all roles, the eligibility of the role for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (with or without Barring List check) will be determined (Appendices A, B and C) and, if required, a DBS application will be completed using the online application service. Identity

documents will be verified by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent and the information submitted to the Diocesan Safeguarding office for checking and forwarding to the DBS. No applicant will commence their employment until the DBS check is completed and the Safeguarding Officer has been informed of the outcome of the DBS check. Depending on the outcome, the applicant may or may not be able to join the team they have volunteered for. The minimum age for a DBS check is 16.

- Once the Benefice Safeguarding Officer has been informed that the DBS check has been successfully completed, they will inform the employee's line manager. Only then may the employee take up their position and commence work.
- The exception to the above occurs if the applicant has a previous DBS disclosure, they have registered with the Update Service and have given permission for the Diocese of Bath and Wells to use this service to check their clearance to work with Children and Young People and/or Vulnerable Adults.
- DBS checks are required to be updated every 3 years (unless registering with the Update service, when no further check will be required but the Diocese must be given permission to access the person's DBS information on the Update service).
- If a role requires a DBS check, a Confidential Declaration form must also be completed (Appendix D)
- All details of DBS checks, Confidential Declarations forms etc. will be stored securely with access only possible by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the incumbent. An up-to-date record sheet detailing those with current checks and the date of expiry of such is kept in the Benefice office, again with access only made available to the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the incumbent.
- Officially advertised appointments will be minuted by PCCs at their next meeting(s). The PCCs will be updated annually regarding those volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- A copy of the Safe Recruitment record sheet (Appendix K) will be held, along with all relevant paperwork, securely by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about Safe Recruitment in the Church of England please refer to the following website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance>

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC in each Parish, unless changes in Diocesan or Governmental policy require earlier review.