

Safeguarding Policy

(Vulnerable Adults)

First Edition May 2021

WALTHAMSTOW CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

In accordance with our Safeguarding Policy we have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator whose name, address and telephone number appear below.

Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Lily Harrison
22 Poplars Road
Walthamstow
London
E17 9AT

Landline: 020 8509 0392

Mobile: 07974 908066

Which sections of the policy are most important for me?

We encourage you to read the whole policy, but please note :

- | | |
|---|--|
| For members : | read especially the "Safeguarding Policy Statement" on page 3 and also "Responding to concerns ..." on pages 10 and 11 |
| For those working with vulnerable adults : | read especially pages 3 to 11, and also page 15 to 18 (all Appendices) |
| For the safeguarding co-ordinator and for all leaders : | read the whole document, including pages 12 to the end, including all appendices |

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

This statement was agreed at the Church members meeting held on

It will be read annually at the Church Annual General Meeting where progress in carrying it out will be monitored.

- ❖ As Christians, we are called to love our neighbour (Matthew 22:39).
- ❖ Our Lord Jesus Christ also said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them." (Matthew 19:14).
- ❖ Therefore, we are committed to supporting our parents and families.
- ❖ As members of this Church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially those who are vulnerable at what ever their stage of life.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual, neglect and emotional abuse of vulnerable people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- ❖ We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole Church.
- ❖ As a Church we are committed to respectful pastoral ministry of adults providing support and empowerment to participate and make their own decisions.
- ❖ As a Church we are committed to being a caring community which provides a loving environment where there is a culture of informed vigilance regarding the dangers of abuse.
- ❖ The Church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people and to providing supervision.
- ❖ The Church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with vulnerable adults.
- ❖ The Church is committed to the Home Office Code of Practice: 'Safe from Harm' and to 'Working together to safeguard children – A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (March 2015).
- ❖ Each worker with children, young people or vulnerable adults must know the recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the Church's agreed procedures and good practice guidelines. When a new worker takes up a role, the Designated Safeguarding Coordinator or their deputy or an elder will go through the recommendation with the person in question. Each year, all children's, youth workers and those who work with vulnerable adults will attend a meeting to go through the appropriate policy and recommendations.
- ❖ At the start of each academic year, this statement will be explained in an age-appropriate manner to young people and children at our groups, which may include talking about online abuse if age appropriate.
- ❖ The Designated Safeguarding Coordinator is Lily Harrison. She will deal with any concerns or matters arising from safeguarding issues and coordinate the DBS checks. If, in an emergency, Lily Harrison is not available, an elder should be approached.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults are part of our Church today. They have much to give as well as to receive. We will listen to them. As we nurture them in worship, learning and in community life, we will respect their wishes and feelings of the children, young people and vulnerable adults.

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – Vulnerable Adults

Name	Walthamstow Central Baptist Church
Address	101A Orford Road Walthamstow London E17 9QR
Telephone Number.	020 8503 7577
Email address	central101@btconnect.com
Denomination	Affiliated to the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches

Church Statement

The Church can be a refuge for those who are vulnerable, for those who have suffered abuse and those who are being abused. This forms part of our obligation to love one another (John 13:34). The Church is in a complex and unique position of providing support for these people. The leadership and congregation are responsible for all Church activities and must satisfy themselves that everything is being done to provide a safe environment for all vulnerable groups.

In an effort to fulfil its responsibilities the Church is committed to:

- ❖ Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the people who work with vulnerable adults
- ❖ Encouraging and supporting family members
- ❖ Supporting those affected by abuse in the church
- ❖ Having a system for dealing with concerns and possible abuse

The Leadership undertakes to:

- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers, seeking to keep workers informed of current guidelines.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect vulnerable people.
- inform the local authority that we have this policy.

Areas of Policy

The Church recognises that some vulnerable adults today are the victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, neglect or acts of omission, discriminatory abuse, and institutional abuse. Accordingly, the Church has adopted the policy contained in this document, (hereafter “the policy”). The policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- ❖ Responding to allegations of abuse, including those against leaders or members of the Church.
- ❖ Appointing volunteers who will work with vulnerable adults
- ❖ Guidelines for working with vulnerable adults
- ❖ Helping victims of abuse
- ❖ Working with offenders

The local Social Services telephone number is **020 8496 3000** (Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults). The email address is safeadults@walthamforest.gov.uk.

The Principles underlying the Policy

- Abuse is a violation of any individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It is a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes alarm or distress.
- There are many types of abuse, sexual abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, neglect or acts of omission, discriminatory abuse, and institutional abuse.
- Those that are considered vulnerable adults include 'people aged eighteen or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or abuse (Department of Health, No Secrets, 2000).
- A significant number of vulnerable adults are at risk of abuse; and that abuse can take place in a person's own home, in the home of a carer or a family member, where day care is provided, within any form of residential or nursing care, including hospitals, and on public transport, or in the street.
- Care providers, relatives, church attenders and members, visitors and members of the public can perpetrate abuse.
- As a Church we will not tolerate any form of abuse and believe that all vulnerable adults should be able to live in an environment which is safe from abuse.
- As a Church we believe that in all situations everyone is entitled to
 - Privacy;
 - Be treated with dignity;
 - Lead an independent life and be enabled to do so;
 - Choose how they lead their lives;
 - The protection of the law;
 - Have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.
- As a Church we aim to respond actively to any situation where abuse is suspected in a positive and constructive way, by:
 - **Caring** – ensuring that staff and volunteers are committed to developing a positive relationship with the individual, actively listening to their concerns and being sensitive to their needs.
 - **Follow effective procedures** – ensuring that staff and volunteers are fully aware of and follow the correct procedures and are encouraged to seek further advice and guidance at every stage of the process. The implementation of the procedures should result in prompt, timely and appropriate action.
 - **Enabling** – ensuring that the individual's wishes are respected and that the individual is given all the support and information possible to assist them in making decisions about possible action to be taken.
 - **Influencing** – when working with external agencies, reiterating the needs and wishes of the individual and maintaining an effective network of contacts and professional relationships to ensure that the process is handled in a co-ordinated and sensitive manner.
 - **Innovating** – reviewing current systems and work practises, asking challenging questions, generating options for action, exploring a wide range of alternatives, and considering how best to deal with each situation as it arises.

Good Practice Guidelines

- All Church workers (paid or unpaid) should conduct themselves in accordance with the reasonable expectations of someone who represents the Church. They are expected to uphold Christian values throughout their lives.
- They should work in a gentle manner that respects the rights and abilities of individuals to enjoy privacy, dignity, independence and choice.
- They should assist in creating an environment within the church that includes everyone.
- They should take care to observe appropriate boundaries between their 'work' and their personal life.
- They should be aware of the dangers of dependency in pastoral relationships and seek advice or supervision when these occurs arise.
- They should recognise their limits and not undertake any ministry that is beyond their competence or role. In such instances the person should be referred to another person or agency with appropriate expertise.
- They should avoid behaviour that could give the impression of inappropriate favouritism or the encouragement of inappropriate relationships.
- They should treat those with whom they minister or visit with respect, encouraging self-determination, independence and choice.
- Pastoral relationships may develop into romantic attachments and such situations should be handled sensitively. Workers (paid or unpaid) need to recognise such a development and make it clear to both the person concerned and an elder. Alternative arrangements should be made for the ongoing pastoral care of the person concerned.
- It is never appropriate for workers to take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with anyone with whom they have a pastoral relationship. Workers should be aware of the power imbalance inherent in pastoral relationships.

Financial Integrity

Financial dealings must always be handled with integrity. Those with authority for such matters should maintain proper systems and not delegate that responsibility to anyone else.

- Church workers (paid or unpaid) should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond their salary and/or recognised allowances.
- They should not be influenced by offers of money.
- They should ensure that Church and personal finances are kept apart and should avoid any conflicts of interest.
- Money received by the Church should be handled by two unrelated people.
- Avoid accepting personal gifts from vulnerable adults. If uncertain, please ask the elders.
- Care should be taken not to canvass for Church donations from those who may be vulnerable including those who would not normally be seen as vulnerable but have recently experienced an emotional event.

Transporting vulnerable adults during Church trips

- Transporting vulnerable adults during Church trips out will require a DBS check.
- Offering lifts to and from church events is not subject to these guidelines and is a purely personal arrangement.
- Drivers need to have comprehensive insurance and ensure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts related to Church activities.
- All those who drive vulnerable people on Church organised activities should be twenty-one or over and should have held a full and clean driving licence for at least two years.
- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport vulnerable people during Church trips out.

Home/residential visiting

- Those who visit vulnerable adults as part of the visitation team will require a DBS check.
- Elders and other staff who carry out regular pastoral visits on behalf of the church will require a DBS check.
- A record of the visit should be kept including time, date, place and reason for visit and if there was an outcome.

Appointing Visitors to Vulnerable Adults

The Leadership (change to elders) will ensure all those on the visitation team and all those involved in regular pastoral visits on behalf of the church will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidelines on safe recruitment.

In appointing workers (volunteer or otherwise) the elders will be responsible for ensuring the following procedure:

- A discussion with an Elder.
- For workers / volunteers who have been attending the church for less than two years, a phone reference shall be taken up.
- To sign and agree to abide by the guidelines in this policy.

Criteria for NOT appointing workers are:

- Any indications of previous offences against children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Previous sexual offences
- Violent or inappropriate behaviour
- Unsuitability for this type of ministry.

Workers will be given their own personal copy of this document for reference.

Workers will be given opportunities to meet together with other visitors to discuss their concerns.

Safeguarding Training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training for the safeguarding co-ordinator and their deputy and developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues amongst all workers to help protect everyone.

The Leadership will also ensure that all those working with vulnerable adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Responding to concerns relating to a Vulnerable Adult related to Church Activities

If you see anyone in the Church acting in ways that might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to the group leader or other church leader about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows everyone to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or manners.

If, after having spoken to the person, you are still unhappy about their behaviour or their lack of willingness to change their behaviour, you should talk to the pastor (or other church leader). The pastor will then deal with the situation. If the person who raised the initial concern feels that the situation is unresolved, they should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Coordinator who will consult with the other elders who will decide if it is a safeguarding issue.

Responding to Allegations against Vulnerable Adults by people within the Church.

If an allegation of abuse is made against someone within the Church this should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Coordinator or, if not available, an elder. If the allegation concerns the Designated Safeguarding Coordinator, you should inform the Pastor or one of the other elders. The person reporting should not themselves inform the accused person.

Immediately an allegation is made, written details of the allegation should be obtained by the Designated Safeguarding Coordinator or, if not available, an elder.

The Designated Safeguarding Coordinator or, if not available, an elder, will decide what to do next.

- If the suspicions or allegations are of a serious nature (particularly those where a vulnerable adult has suffered or is likely to suffer harm, or where a criminal offence may have been committed), the elders will immediately contact Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team, or the Police directly for advice.
- Other cases can be dealt with internally, although less serious allegations may still need to be examined objectively by someone independent of the church, and so may be, at the discretion of the elders, refer to Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team.

The elders will decide when to inform the accused person of the allegation. If the matter has been referred to Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adult Team or the Police, this decision shall be made in conjunction with the relevant outside agency.

Having completed a telephone referral, the elders may be asked to complete the Waltham Forest Adult Safeguarding Adults Partnership's Safeguarding Adults Alert form (on file on the church computer or see the website link <https://directory.walthamforest.gov.uk/kb5/walthamforest/directory/advice.page?id=7TTu6wnSTXU>)

The Church recognises that the allegations may be false, misplaced, exaggerated or mistaken, and that where this is the case, there may be malicious and deliberate intent, or a genuine mistake. Regardless of the motives underlying any allegations, they may also be well-founded. Everyone who deals with allegations of abuse should maintain an open and enquiring mind. It is also essential that all agencies concerned act in a manner and at a speed suitable to the nature and level of the concern once suspicions are brought to their attention.

If after investigation by outside agencies the allegation is considered serious enough for the person to be removed from their role, even if they step down of their own accord, the elders will inform the DBS.

RECORD KEEPING

Make notes as soon as possible about what is causing you concern. Record dates and times of events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such record should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

Responding to concerns relating to a Vulnerable Adult not related to Church activities

Acting in an emergency

Call the police and or the ambulance service without delay. Do not hesitate when calling the emergency services without delay. Do not hesitate when calling emergency services as it is the vulnerable adult's right as a citizen to receive immediate help.

Imminent risk

Where there are adult protection concerns an immediate formal referral must be made to the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team via phoning 020 8496 3000 or emailing safeadults@walthamforest.gov.uk who are likely then to ask for the Waltham Forest Adult Safeguarding Adults Partnership's Safeguarding Adults Alert form (on the church computer or the see website link <https://directory.walthamforest.gov.uk/kb5/walthamforest/directory/advice.page?id=7TTu6wnSTXU>) to be completed. If it becomes clear that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police should be contacted immediately.

Less urgent situations

If you are unclear that your concerns should be addressed under the adult protection process, contact the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team, let them make the decision whether it should be followed up.

What if a vulnerable adult does not want any action taken?

If the adult has capacity and they are not being unduly pressured or intimidated, they may ask you not to intervene. Their wishes should be respected, but this does not remove your responsibility to report any concerns, as other adults may also be at risk. Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team will conduct a section 42 enquiry.

Abuse in a care setting

Although it may be in the process of being dealt with in-house, it is still needs to be reported to the police or Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team.

What should be done if one vulnerable adult abuses another?

Abuse of one vulnerable adult by another should be treated with zero tolerance and be addressed as an adult protection issue.

Disclosure of historical abuse

When such allegations are made, they should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns in terms of prompt referral to the stator agencies. If possible, it should be established by the person hearing the disclosure to the whereabouts of the alleged perpetrator in order to safeguard other vulnerable people. If a formal complaint is made written statements will be required. If the case goes to trial evidence may need to be given. It is important the survivor is supported throughout the process.

Disclosures by perpetrators of past abuse

In some cases, offences only come to light after many years. In such situations it must be remembered that the perpetrator may still be a substantial risk to other vulnerable people, therefore, the police should be informed. It is necessary to tell a person who admits an offence against any child or adult that such information cannot be kept confidential.

Domestic abuse

If there is a child within the household a referral will need to be made to either the police or child services. The child's welfare is paramount and where there is a conflict between the wishes of the adult and the welfare of the child, it is the welfare of the child that will always be given priority.

You must never attempt to investigate the situation yourself and never speak directly to the person against whom allegations have been made.

Dealing with suspected abusers and known offenders

The term offender applies only to those who have a conviction or who have accepted a caution, reprimand or warning for a criminal offence.

The term suspected abuser is used to refer to those who have been subject to an allegation which has not been formally substantiated, but which appears to be reasonably well founded.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 some old convictions and cautions are deemed spent after a period of time, which varies according to the offence. However, for the purpose of work with children or vulnerable adults no offence is considered spent.

A DBS check containing information is termed a blemished or unclear disclosure.

Old minor and unrelated offences will not prohibit otherwise suitable people from working with children or vulnerable adults. Thus, a risk assessment will be undertaken proportionate to the matter disclosed.

Ministering to people who are known sex offenders

When it is known that a member of the congregation has sexually abused a young or vulnerable person, the elders and Designated Safeguarding Coordinator must be consulted in order for a safe course of action to be agreed in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies. A written agreement or contract will usually be entered into with the offender which reflects research evidence about the compulsive nature of sexual abuse.

Where a sex offender is known, befriended and helped by a group of volunteers to lead a fulfilled life without direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, the chances of reoffending are diminished and the Church has thus an important role contributing to the prevention of abuse.

Where a small group support group is formed, the participants should be chosen carefully. It should include an elder.

If the offender's victim, or in some cases the victim's family, attends the church, it is likely to be necessary to introduce the offender to another fellowship. Consideration must also be given to other people who have been abused in the past.

The offender should not accept any official role in the Church which gives him or her status or authority; a vulnerable person may deem that person to be trustworthy.

A meeting should be convened with the offender, explaining that the appointed small group and a few others from the congregation will need to know the facts in order to create a safe environment for him or her. Those needing to know are likely to include the pastor, the designated safeguarding coordinator and any befriending volunteers. The police should be invited to the meeting, in addition to the probation service and social services, if they have a role.

Consideration should be given to whether, with the offender's agreement, the congregation should be told. The advantages and disadvantages of this course of action should be carefully considered, including the offender's need for protection as a vulnerable adult.

It must be made clear that no one else apart from those identified on the agreement will be informed of the facts without the offender's knowledge. The highest levels of confidentiality should be maintained unless there is a breach of the agreement and it is necessary to inform others for the purpose of safeguarding.

The group should offer support and friendship as well as supervision.

Those with pastoral responsibility will need to discuss with the group appropriate ways for the offender to develop and grow as a Christian without putting him or herself and others at risk.

It will be necessary to establish clear boundaries, both to protect young or vulnerable people and to reduce the possibility of the offender being wrongly accused of abuse.

It should be made clear that as people change role, their successors will take on becoming involved. An agreement must remain in place so long as the person is part of the congregation, whether or not they are on licence or their name appears on the Sex Offenders Register.

If the person leaves the church for another church, then the police should be involved, and a new agreement should be made. If the person leaves without informing anyone where or whether they might attend worship, the police should be informed.

Whenever possible, the agreement should be drawn up as a two-way covenant. The Church will agree to levels of support and appropriate access to worship etc while the offender agrees to the appropriate behavioural guidelines included in the agreement.

The elders will work together to write the agreement which might look something like the template below:

- ✓ I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children or young or vulnerable people.
- ✓ I will attend meetings/house groups as directed by the Church leadership
- ✓ I will sit where directed in the Church and will not place myself in the vicinity of children, young or vulnerable people
- ✓ I will not enter certain parts of the building designated by the leadership, not any area where children's activities are in progress
- ✓ I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children or vulnerable people in the home
- ✓ I accept that and will sit with me during Church activities accompanying me when I need to use other facilities. They will know that I am a Schedule 1 offender / registered with the police under the terms of the Sex Offenders Act
- ✓ I accept that there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care
- ✓ I accept that will provide me with pastoral care
- ✓ I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, I may be barred from attending the Church and in such circumstances the leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies and any other relevant organisation and the Church congregation
- ✓ I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every months and will remain for an indefinite period

(This document would need to be signed and dated by the offender and by the Church representatives)

Date

Signed
Robert Jeffery – Pastor

This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed

Date

Robert Jeffery

Signed

Date

Roger Neil

Signed

Date

Maurice Titmarsh

Signed

Date

Lily Harrison

Appendix 2 – Descriptions and definitions

Definition of a vulnerable adult

'A person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' (Definition taken from No Secrets March 2000 Department of Health)

This could include people with learning difficulties, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It is important to include people whose condition and subsequent vulnerability fluctuates it may include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social behaviour.

It is important to understand that a vulnerable adult may be abused by another vulnerable adult.

Adult mistreatment/abuse

As defined by the Department of Health's No secrets March 2000:

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.'

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to or exploitation of, the individual. In a Church context it could be any misuse of a pastoral or managerial relationship. Harm is what results from mistreatment or abuse.

Physical abuse

This may include:

Hitting, slapping, scratching;
Pushing or rough handling;
Assault and battery;
Restraining without justifiable reason;
Inappropriate and/or unauthorised use of medication;
Deprivation of clothing, warmth and health care needs; and
Inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual abuse

This may include:

Sexual activity which an adult cannot or has not consented to or has been pressured into;
Sexual activity which takes place when the person is unaware of the consequences or risks involve;
Rape or attempted rape; and
Sexual assault and/or sexual harassment.

Non-contact abuse such as taking inappropriate images of the adult, voyeurism or pornography is also considered sexual abuse.

Emotional or psychological abuse

This may include:

Verbal abuse;
Humiliation and ridicule;
Threats of punishment, abandonment, intimidation or exclusion from services;
Isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks;
Deliberate denial of religious or cultural needs; and
Failure to provide access to appropriate social skills and educational development training.

Financial abuse

This may include:

Misuse or theft of money:

Fraud and/or extortion of material assets;

Misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits; and

Exploitation or pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.

Neglect and actions of omission

This may include:

Ignoring medical, nutritional or physical care needs;

Failure to allow access to care or equipment for functional independence;

Failure to give prescribed medication;

Failure to allow access to appropriate health, social care or educational services;

Neglect of accommodation, heating, lighting etc;

Failure to provide privacy and dignity; and

Professional neglect.

Discriminatory abuse

Discrimination on any grounds of age, sex, race, colour, language, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, disability or hate crime.

Domestic abuse

Home Office Definition 2004:

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.'

If there are children in the household, they are witnesses to the abuse and are considered to be emotionally abused at least whether or not they are in the same room. They may also be directly affected by abuse.

Self-neglect or self-injury

Self-neglect is any failure of an adult to take care of themselves that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause within a short period of time, serious physical, mental or emotional harm or substantial damage to or loss of assets. Self-neglect can happen as a result of an individual's choice of lifestyle, or the person may be depressed, have poor health, have cognitive (memory or decision making) problem, or be physically unable to care for themselves. Often, the cases which give rise to the most concern are those where a vulnerable adult refuses help and services and is seen to be at grave risk as a result. If an agency is satisfied that the vulnerable adult has the capacity to make an informed decision, then that person has the right to refuse services.

Institutional abuse

It means that someone who has been institutionalised is being abused. Examples could be prison inmates, mental health patients, residents of care homes. The abuse or omission of care is usually caused by the people looking after them.

Mental capacity

Mental capacity is not a universal concept and therefore has to be applied in a specific context:

Every adult has the right to make their own decisions and it must be assumed they have the capacity to do so, unless it is proved otherwise;

It is the right of an individual to be supported to make their own decisions – people must be given all appropriate help before anyone concludes that they cannot make their own decisions;

An individual must retain the right to make what might be seen as unwise or eccentric decisions;

Any action taken on behalf of an individual who lacks capacity must be in the best interest of that individual;

Assessing lack of capacity – The Mental Capacity Act 2005 sets out a single clear test for assessing whether a person lacks capacity to take a particular decision at a particular time. It is a decision specific test. No one can be labelled ‘incapable’ as a result of a particular medical condition or diagnosis. A lack of capacity cannot be established merely by reference to a person’s age, appearance, or any condition or aspect of person’s behaviour which might lead others to make unjustified assumptions about capacity.

Criminal offences

Criminal offences are assault, whether physical, psychological or sexual, theft, fraud or other forms of financial exploitation, and certain types of discrimination, whether on racial or gender grounds. Alleged criminal offences differ from all other non-criminal forms of abuse in that it is the responsibility for initiating action rests with the State in the form of the police and Crown Prosecution Service. Accordingly, when complaints about alleged abuse suggest that a criminal offence may have been committed, it is imperative that reference should be made to the police as a matter of urgency. Criminal investigation by the police take priority over all other lines of enquiry. Neglect and poor professional practice also need to be taken into account.

Appendix 3 – Local Escalation Procedures

In the first instance, the concern should be referred back to the Waltham Forest Safeguarding Adults Team.

If still you feel that concerns have not been acted on appropriately the escalate your concerns to the Head of Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by phoning 020 8496 4831 or 07929205209.

Where you remain concerned following your discussion with the head of service, an elder should speak to the Assistant Director of Adult Social Care on 02084963645.

If you still remained concerned an elder should speak to the Corporate Director Adult Care & Quality Standards on 02084963685 or 07816135124.

If your concerns are still not dealt with appropriately, the Pastor or most senior elder should speak to the Deputy Chief Executive, Families Directorate, on 02084963205 or 07817 332880.

In the event that your concerns involve adults social care in another local authority such as Redbridge, the above staff will contact the relevant staff in that organisation.

It is important that concerns are speedily escalated within the management structure for Adult’s social care until a satisfactory resolution of concern is secured.

Appendix 4 – Modern Slavery and trafficking

Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation. It encompasses:

- human trafficking
- slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour

An individual could have been a victim of human trafficking and/or slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Victims may not be aware that they are being trafficked or exploited, and may have consented to elements of their exploitation, or accepted their situation. If you think that modern slavery has taken place, the case should be referred to the local police as our Church cannot make a referral to the National Referral Mechanism. Anyone can make the report to the police, as anyone can report a crime.