**Parish of St Andrew’s, Buckland Monachorum and the**

**Church of the Holy Spirit, Milton Combe**

**Parish statement on Domestic Abuse**

**Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse**

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.

**In all our activities:**

• We will value, listen to and respect both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**In our publicity**:

• We will raise 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 we will:**

• ensure that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help;

• work with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

**When in our care we will**:

• ensure that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;

• identify and outline the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**If you have any concerns or need to talk to someone please contact Trish Topham at: safeguarding@bucklandchurchdevon.co.uk**