Parish of West Swindon & Lydiard Tregoze, 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.

**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 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;
* 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;
* identifying and outlining 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 any one please contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer:**

**Holy Trinity Church, Shaw: Rebecca Kershaw Tel 07718 812963**

**St Mary’s Lydiard Tregoze: Jacqueline Kirwan Tel 07941 861586**