

THE PARISH OF THE HOLY CROSS, SHREWSBURY

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To whom it may concern

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Vanessa Wilkinson – Consultancy role in ‘Safeguarding’ processes and procedures.

It is an imperative duty to ensure the safety of young people and vulnerable adults who are entrusted into our care. This applies to churches as organisations and also to the stipendiary and voluntary staff who have contact with our young people.

In the past two decades the manner in which this has been done has undergone a welter of legislation, not least that which resulted from the Bichard enquiry. The results of this legislation have therefore been moving goalposts to which Dioceses and Parishes alike have had to respond.

Every Parish is different and whilst Diocesan guidelines can be very helpful there is no ‘one size fits all’ set of documentation, processes or procedures which can simply be down-loaded and enacted.

I was till recently the Parish Priest at St. Mary Extra (Pear Tree), Southampton and the Church Council asked Vanessa to steer them through the necessary steps from starting to analyse the materials, through identifying the necessary elements for inclusion and to the final production of a set of ‘Safeguarding’ processes and procedures which the Council could implement.

This was done in an exceptionally professional manner, with detailed explanation to the Standing Committee of the Council in both written and ‘live’ presentation format. The result is that Pear Tree Church now has processes and procedures relating to the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable adults which I would suggest are as robust as possible, but which are also accessible and clearly understandable.

I would commend without hesitation Vanessa’s role in this process.



Paul Firmin