The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin East Barnet

Domestic Abuse Policy

The following domestic abuse policy was adopted by the parish church of St Mary the Virgin, East Barnet, at the meeting of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) on 18 May 2026. It will be reviewed by the PCC annually. The next review will be at the first meeting of the next PCC year.

This policy defines domestic abuse as abuse occurring within family and other intimate relationships, both in and beyond the home.

We adopt the House of Bishops of the Church of England Domestic Abuse Policy, 'Responding Well to Domestic Abuse'. In accordance with this policy, our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safe environment and culture.
- Within that environment and culture, working to protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse.
- Recognising the equality of individuals, of all genders, abilities, ethnic backgrounds, ages and sexualities, within relationships.
- Enabling any safeguarding concerns to be raised.
- Responding to any safeguarding concerns appropriately.

The church recognises that:

- All victims or survivors of abuse have a right to protection.
- Domestic abuse can and does occur in all communities.
- Domestic abuse causes harm to victims, survivors, and those who witness or who are exposed to abusive behaviour
- Domestic abuse can take different forms, including coercive and controlling behaviour, physical, sexual, emotional, financial or spiritual abuse.
    - "coercive behaviour" means an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten the victim
    - "controlling behaviour" means an act or pattern of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

The church will:

- Publicise agencies with expertise in supporting victims or survivors of domestic abuse.
- Provide information on specific support services, resources and shelters, in public and in private areas.
- Raise awareness about domestic abuse in our public worship and preaching.
- Signpost advice about healthy family and intimate relationships.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Promote a culture that enables victims or survivors of domestic abuse to access safeguarding procedures and pastoral care.
- Encourage anyone with a concern about domestic abuse to contact the named Parish Safeguarding Officer, who works with the Rector and PCC to implement safeguarding procedures.
- Review the implementation of this domestic abuse policy at least annually.

Those who share in the leadership of the church through their membership of the PCC agree to abide by this policy and the subsequent safeguarding procedures established by this church.

This church appoints Helen Ball as the Parish Safeguarding Officer in 2026-7 and Margaret Cranfield as its PCC Safeguarding Advocate in 2026-7.

Rector .....

An Assistant Churchwarden .....