

Parish of St Thomas with St Stephen Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

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 openly 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 child 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 perpetrators of domestic abuse

In our publicity

- raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public areas of relevance to survivors, children and 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 perpetrators of domestic abuse.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and procedures annually.