



# Safeguarding Policy

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## 1. ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS

### 1.1 Kent Gospel Partnership (KGP)

Email: [admin@kentgospelpartnership.uk](mailto:admin@kentgospelpartnership.uk)

Website: [kentgospelpartnership.uk](http://kentgospelpartnership.uk)

### 1.2 Charitable Status

The Kent Gospel Partnership is a registered CIO: 1203436

### 1.3 Mission Statement

The Kent Gospel Partnership's vision is to reach Kent for Christ, by Local churches partnering to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to all people in Kent for the glory of God.

### 1.4 About us

The KGP is a partnership of bible believing, gospel centred churches across Kent. Individual partner churches are all legal entities in their own right. The KGP has no legal authority over or responsibility for its partner churches. The KGP has no building of its own so meetings and events are held in church venues around Kent.

The KGP is led by Trustees who form the Steering Group, which organise and oversee the work of the KGP. The Trustees are all volunteers. The Administrator is the only paid member of staff. Due to the small nature of the KGP there is only a designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a nominated safeguarding Trustee.

### 1.5 Safeguarding Statement

The KGP takes safeguarding seriously and seeks to have a policy which accurately reflects its various events and interests and ensures safeguarding procedures are met. Therefore, the policy will be updated to continually meet the needs of the partnership. The KGP is an overarching organisation which has no premises of its own. The KGP organises meetings in various venues around Kent, for adults to attend, either as one offs or more regularly. The KGP acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved. There will be no mention of children in this policy as the KGP does not work with children. Therefore, this policy is reflective of the safeguarding procedures needed for the work of the KGP.

## 2. TRUSTEES & DSL RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 Commitment to Safeguarding

As Trustees we endeavour to provide a safe and caring environment for those attending events organised by the KGP. We seek to follow the biblical mandate to care for those in need as well as all legal and statutory requirements. We believe that everyone is made in God's image and are inherently valuable to Him. As Christians we seek to shine the light of Christ's love into this dark world, we can in part do this by caring for those who have been hurt and abused. We seek to make the events organised and the work environment safe places, places where a culture of love and care, openness and honesty radiate through everything we do, from our Trustees, staff, volunteers, and speakers, to our conversations and how we respond to those who have been hurt and abused.

As Trustees we seek to be transparent in our dealings with safeguarding issues, seeking to glorify God in our practice. We endeavour to put the care of those hurt/abused above the reputation of the KGP and ourselves. As part of this transparency the use of NDA's will be excluded from our practice.

We are committed to building constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy sets out agreed guidelines, which aims to consider scriptural, legal, and practical principles, relating to the following areas:

- Responding to allegations of abuse
- Appointing trustees, staff, volunteers, and speakers
- Best practice guidelines
- Helping victims of abuse
- Managing workers

### 2.2 Trustee Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that they:

- Actively support safeguarding principles.
- Know what the Safeguarding Policy says and endorse it.
- Ensure adequate support is given to the DSL.
- Be DBS checked as per the requirement of the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

- Attend Trustee Safeguarding training every 4 years.

The relationship between the Trustees and the DSL is crucial. Whatever the situation, it is important the Trustees never try to deal with safeguarding issues independently and that they give the DSL their full support. As part of their wider safeguarding role, the Trustees should also ensure compliance in areas such as health and safety, insurance and charity law, and financial and reporting procedures.

## 2.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead's Role

The DSL needs to:

- Make sure they are known to everyone.
- Keep up to date with relevant legislation.
- Organise training for those who require it within the KGP.
- Be willing to attend training.
- Review the safeguarding policy annually and update as required.
- Request references for new staff/trustees.
- Ensure that all new staff are given induction training.
- Keep a register of Trustees, staff, speaker, and volunteers attended events and meetings.
- Prepare an annual Safeguarding Report for the Trustees
- Report to relevant authorities' allegations of abuse where they meet the threshold or illegal activity has taken place.

## 2.4 Safeguarding at the KGP

The safeguarding roles within the KGP

### Designated Safeguarding Lead – Fiona Strasser

They will advise the KGP on any matters related to the safeguarding of and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered, or suspected.

### Safeguarding Trustee – Matt Maylor

They will be a liaison between the DSL and the Trustees and will support the DSL when needed. They will also act as the liaison between the DSL and the Trustees if the DSL is not a Trustee and doesn't attend trustee meetings.

## 3. RECRUITMENT/APPOINTING SPEAKERS

### 3.1 Commitment to Safer Recruitment

The Trustees are committed to ensuring the best practices are in place for recruiting staff, trustees, volunteers and speakers. Safer recruitment will promote a healthy culture within the KGP and the events that it organises. This is achieved by:

- Trustees & Staff are required to declare their belief, and allegiance to the KGP Statement of Beliefs.
- Trustees and Staff being DBS checked.
- Having role descriptions and person specifications for every position.
- Support and training.
- Having a DSL.

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is illegal for a person banned from working with children/adults to work with the KGP or serve as a Trustee.

### 3.2 Recruitment Process for Staff

In appointing staff, the following procedures are completed by the Chair of Trustees and the DSL.

- Obtain the relevant level of DBS check.
- Follow the Disclosure & Barring Procedures. The KGP will follow the Code of Practice laid down by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for obtaining Disclosures and retention of information.
- Obtain references.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's Safeguarding Model Policy and knows how to report concerns and refer to the full policy if necessary.
- The applicant has completed a probationary period (if this is necessary for their role).
- Receiving feedback from other leaders on the progress of the new appointee during and at the end of this probationary period.

### 3.3 Recruitment of Trustees

Trustees recruited for the KGP are those who are committed our mission statement and seek to lead the work of the KGP for those aims. Trustees can be from partner churches or individuals, and normally but not always, are recommended by current trustees. The following procedures are completed by the chair of Trustees and the DSL.

- Obtain a basic DBS check.
- Follow the Disclosure & Barring Procedures. The KGP will follow the Code of Practice laid down by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for obtaining Disclosures and retention of information.
- Obtain references.
- Give them a copies or access to all the charity policies, including Safeguarding.

### 3.4 Recruitment of Volunteers

The KGP has two different types of volunteers; those who serve as part of the Kent Men's/Women's Convention Planning Team and those who volunteer to serve at those events or other one-off events. The Conventions are held yearly.

#### KMC & KWC Planning Team

- Prior approval to be obtained from the Planning Team & the Trustees.
- Volunteer Form to be completed (See appendix 2).
- Obtain reference from current church leadership.

#### Event Volunteers

- They need to be approved by the Planning Team or Trustees for one-off events.

### 3.5 Appointing Speakers

The Trustees take the appointment of speakers at their events seriously. There is a desire to ensure that no unsuitable person is given a platform. The following procedures are in place for any proposed speaker and to ensure that speakers are suitable to be given a platform. However, at times, there is an understanding that these procedures will not reveal past issues for a speaker, who will be platformed at an event organised by the KGP.

- Approval of speaker from the Trustees.
- Conversation between Planning Team Chair or member with speaker to discuss subject and content of the talk
- Speaker Form to be completed (see appendix 3).
- Obtain two references, one being a someone in leadership at their current church, or previous church if they have been at their current church for less than 2 years.
- Check name on National Register of Clergy, if necessary.

Those speaking at events will be advertised in good time of the event. The Trustees will listen carefully to any issues raised beforehand or afterwards and act accordingly.

## 4. TRAINING

### 4.1 Training

There is a commitment to providing on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for the Trustees, DSL and staff. There is an awareness that training develops a healthy culture and ensures all workers are competent to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities and promote the welfare of adults at the KGP and its events. The Trustees will ensure that role-specific training is provided for those who work with adults as required. This might include First Aid training, Food Hygiene, Health and Safety for example.



## 5. WORKING SAFELY

The KGP has an amazing opportunity to organise events for individuals throughout the county of Kent and beyond. These best practice guidelines are in place to help those working on behalf of the KGP to do it well, prioritising the safety and well-being of those who are attending.

### 5.1 Position of Trust

Trustees and staff, paid or voluntary, should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. They should never:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage.
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual.

### 5.2 Code of Conduct

The KGP has a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers serving at events. (see Appendix 4)

### 5.3 Data Protection

The KGP will comply with the Principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) as set out in the churches Data Protection Policy.

It is vital to understand that disclosing information about adult is allowed when there are safeguarding concerns. Advice should always be sought from Adult Services, or the police. Thirtyone:eight can also advise in such circumstances.

All safeguarding information is stored in a locked filing cabinet and only to be viewed by the DSL and only others at the discretion of the DSL or if needed by other agencies.

### 5.4 Health & Safety/ Risk Assessment

See the KGP's Health & Safety Policy.

Risk Assessments are undertaken for any venues used to host KGP events. These are made known the Volunteers serving at the event at a pre-event meeting. Public Liability Insurance is purchased for events held and not covered by the building/church's own insurance.

## 5.5 Videoing and Taking Photographs

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, and stricter regulations with the implementation of the GDPR, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or video footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or that video is prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation.

Permission should always be sought before using photographs/videos of people at KGP events for publicity or the website.

## 5.6 Complaints Procedure

Please see the Complaints Policy. The Complaints Policy refers to complaints of a general nature. In the case of safeguarding concerns, follow the procedures of this policy.

## 6. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

It is the KGP's legal responsibility to record and report allegations of abuse where they meet the threshold. The trustees shall never seek to resolve such issues internally. It is not their job to decide what is true or untrue but to report what is alleged. Responding means listening, helping where possible, recording and reporting to others when safeguarding concerns arise. Below is the procedure for responding to concerns identified or disclosed during, or in relation to, KGP ministry or events.

### 6.1 Safeguarding Adults

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults, especially those with care and support needs.
- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

There is an understanding that adults should have control over the process and can decide how to go forward when dealing with situations of abuse. The KGP seeks to ensure that when dealing with adult safeguarding issues is it person-led and outcome focused. It engages the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances their involvement, choice and control as well as improving their quality of life, well-being, and safety.

### 6.2 Initial Response to a Concern or Allegation of Abuse

If there is a concern that an adult may have been abused or a direct allegation of abuse has been made, it is important the person receiving this information does the following:

- Fill in a Disclosure Form. See appendix 5

- Hand or email completed sheet to the DSL within 24 hours.
- Do not discuss with anyone other than those nominated above.

The DSL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern.

- Trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

The Trustees will support the DSL in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

### 6.3 Detailed Procedures where there is a Concern that an Adult Needs Protection

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including physical, sexual, spiritual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, DSL:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively, Thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

### 6.4 Responding to Historic Abuse Disclosures

If historic child abuse by someone who is now an adult, it is the victim's decision whether the information should be referred to the police. Victims have the right to report historic abuse regardless of how long ago the abuse took place, however, they are under no obligation to do so, and the decision is entirely theirs.

We will seek to support the victim through the process of deciding what action they wish to take but the decision is entirely theirs.

## 7. RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES

### 7.1 Importance of Listening

Listening is an important facet of communicating and building a safe environment within the KGP. An adult may want to talk about other matters than safeguarding but the way they are responded to will indicate how a more serious matter will be heard and listened to. Adults who can listen attentively can help prevent abuse from happening in the first place as well as ensuring that appropriate responses are made whenever it takes place.

There may be occasion when an adult may want to make a disclosure, so give the person time to talk. Be clear about confidentiality; but reassurance can be given that the information will be kept confidential between those who need to know.

### 7.2 Effective Listening

Start by telling the adult that because of the importance of what they are telling you, you are going to write it down. Read it out to them at the end and ask if it is accurate?

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk, listen without interrupting.
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by repeating back words or short phrases they have used.
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep.

Remember, as person discloses, their words are likely to be incoherent and they will be experiencing the abuse again as they talk about it. Be sensitive and patient. It will be one of the hardest things they will have done; it could be a burden they have been carrying around for many years. They will only disclose when they feel safe to do so.

### 7.3 Prayer

Prayer is an intrinsic part of pastoral care in dealing with disclosures. If this is being offered, then it needs to be undertaken sensitively and responsibly with no pressure exerted on the individual. Remember, the adult disclosing could have a very fractured relationship with God and the church due to where and how the abuse took place.

#### **7.4 Supporting those Affected by Abuse**

The Trustees are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate and supporting to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the KGP.

#### **7.5 Dealing with Allegations which Involve Partner Churches**

Churches join the KGP voluntarily and the KGP has no legal control/responsibility or has no central oversight of the way a member church operates. To join the partnership churches must sign a declaration that they will adhere to and uphold the KGP's Statement of Beliefs. However, we accept that the KGP may receive allegations from those from our partnership or outside of that.

When a legitimate allegation has been received, the KGP will seek to engage with the church DSL or leadership about issues that have been raised. We want to help a church to respond biblically and wisely to allegations made against them.

If we believe that abusive behaviour has taken place which constitutes illegal activity, we shall contact the relevant authorities directly (police, social services, Charity Commission).

Where there is evidence of serious misconduct or systemic abuse, which is not dealt with by a partner church, the church may be removed from the KGP. Where appropriate, KGP will report to statutory bodies.

## 8. MANAGEMENT OF WORKERS

### 8.1 Allegations against Staff, Paid or Voluntary

Allegations of abuse against Staff must be treated seriously and responded to immediately. If you suspect in any way that abuse is taking place, the DSL must be informed, and immediate appropriate action should be taken to protect that adult.

### 8.2 Responding to Allegations Against Staff, Paid or Voluntary

The nature of the allegation may well dictate the response, particularly if it is of a serious nature that requires the involvement of Children's Social Services, Adult Services, or the Police. Even if the person against whom an allegation is made resigns to avoid action being taken, this does not remove the responsibility of the Trustees to report the matter appropriately and to take further action as necessary.

Where allegations have been substantiated or there is ongoing concern regarding the workers conduct with children or adults at risk, contact will be made with the DBS and the Charity Commission as is the KGP's legal duty.

### 8.3 Dismissal of a member of Staff, Paid or Voluntary

After consultation with the statutory agencies, the matter will be dealt with by the DSL in conjunction with The Trustees and appropriate action taken. See the Discipline Policy for further procedures.

### 8.4 Whistleblowing

The KGP we will follow the principles contained in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Therefore, we expect that all employees (paid or voluntary) will report improper actions and omissions. Whilst all malpractice and acts of discrimination will be investigated, it is especially important that suspicions of abuse are immediately reported to the DSL.

### 8.5 Offenders Attending Event

Guidelines for a known offender attend a KGP event:

- DSL to inform Trustee's.
- DSL to meet with offender's current church DSL/Leadership.
- If the Trustees and DSL feel it is safe for the offender to attend, they will set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep and will be monitored.

## 9. TRUSTEE STATEMENT

The following statement was agreed by the Trustees of the Kent Gospel Partnership

- The KGP is committed to the safeguarding of all those who work for us, with us and attend any of our events and to ensure their well-being.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with us.
- We understand where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- We shall inform the Charity Commission in the event of a serious breach of safeguarding.
- We seek to create a healthy culture of Christian love and care for all those we work with and for. We aim to do this by being honest and transparent in how we commit to safeguarding; in following our procedures and our policies for God’s glory and the furtherance of his kingdom in Kent.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

Signed by the Trustees of the KGP

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