# The Sussex County Association of Change Ringers

# Safeguarding Policy

## Maintaining a Safe Environment for Young People and Vulnerable Adults in Bell Ringing

| Revision | Date | Reviewed by | Agreed by Committee | Changes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 08/01/2022 | Safeguarding Officer Treasurer (wrt Insurance) | 08/01/2022 | Incorporate recommendations of the CofE Training Framework 2021) and CCCBR safeguarding audit . Changes to interpretation of Framework by diocese. |
| 1 | 02/03/2023 | Safeguarding | 10/03/23 | |
| 1a | 20/04/23 | officer | | |
| | | Safeguarding | | |
| | | officer | | |

## Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Association has adopted the model policy produced by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

1. The Association is committed to the safeguarding of children under 18 and, where appropriate, vulnerable adults, and ensuring their well-being.
2. The Association has a responsibility to prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial or discriminatory abuse or neglect of such children or vulnerable adults.
3. The Association undertakes to exercise due diligence in the appointment and selection of those who work closely with children or vulnerable adults.
4. The Association will follow guidelines issued by the church authorities and meet such civil legal requirements as may be in force.

## Contents


- Safeguarding in the context of bellringing
  - Legal requirements
  - Safeguarding your tower
  - Safeguarding at Association events
  - Dealing with Incidents and Known Offenders
- Background information

- Sussex County Association of Change Ringers Nature of Operation
- Church requirements and expectations
- Application of principles to the Association
- Review of Policy

• Appendix
- Permission to Ring and Attend Sussex County Association of Change Ringers Outside Activity Forms
- Good Practice Checklist
- Reporting flowchart

## Safeguarding in the Context of Bell Ringing

The involvement of young people has long been a feature of church bell ringing. The teaching of these young people and their acceptance and encouragement by adult ringers has made the world of ringing almost unique in the way in which the different age groups interact. The local Diocese requires all Parochial Church Councils to have an acceptable policy for work with young people in their respective parishes. All ringing-related activities for young people at parish level will be subject to the requirements of the local PCC policy. However, there is a range of different ringing-related activities in which young ringers may take part, not all of which will be addressed by a Parish policy. The following list indicates the range of activities but is not exhaustive:

1. Attendance at practice and service ringing in their own tower.
2. Attendance at practice and service ringing in other towers.
3. Participation in activities arranged locally e.g. outings, social events etc.
4. Attendance at local Association meetings or practices.
5. Participation in other Association events e.g. outings etc.
6. Attendance at Association training events.

Activities 1 and 2 are the responsibility of the Parish and activity 3 is the responsibility of the organiser (recognising that the churches and establishments visited may ask for confirmation that safeguarding has been addressed). Those activities organised by the Association fall principally into categories 4, 5 and 6, and the Association Policy seeks to demonstrate how the recommendations of the various guidelines have been addressed and their application to Association Officers.

## Basic Legal Requirements

Any ringers carrying out one-to-one physical training of young persons under 18 years of age on a regular basis are considered to be carrying out a “regulated activity”.

Regular basis frequency is defined as being minimum of

I. once a week

II. four days in 30 or

III. involving overnight hours of 02:00 to 06:00.

Anyone meeting these criteria will be required to undergo a background check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or, in Scotland, Disclosure Scotland check. On a local basis such checks will be initiated by the Parish Safeguarding Officer of the parish in which the ringing is taking place. The DBS certificate is portable and can be used at any tower in the Diocese.

It is an offence for anyone to knowingly allow a person who has a criminal record relevant to the protection of minors or vulnerable adults to carry out a regulated activity.

## Safeguarding your tower

1. All ringers are strongly encouraged to complete the CofE online Basic Awareness Training. Certificates may be requested by the Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Diocese makes provision for ringers without computer access.
2. All tower captains, trainers and deputies must complete the online Foundation Training. This is the case for all ringers, not only those towers with young ringers.

3. The courses can be found at https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org/basic-awareness// 4. If you have young ringers under the age of 18 regularly attending your tower, you must inform your Parish Safeguarding Officer and comply with their requirements. This will include the formal appointment of the tower captain (which is under Safer Recruitment guidelines)and other trainers by the PCC, a DBS check and (from 2024) completion of the Safeguarding Leadership course via Zoom . The Association Permission to Ring form should be completed (Appendix A ). While waiting for a DBS check, a parent should be present.

5. When teaching a young person, or giving a lift in a car (with parental consent), two adults should be present (and in the case of a car, the young person should sit in the back seat and one adult should be DBS checked).

6. It is good practice to display the Good Practice notice (Appendix B) and the Safeguarding flowchart (Appendix C) and to keep a register of attendees at practice night, services and other ringing. 7. If young ringers visit your tower infrequently, there is no requirement to have a DBS checked adult present, but it would be wise to ensure parents are aware of this.

8. This policy does not cover ringing involving young ringers outside their normal towers, but the organiser would be advised to address Safeguarding and the tower visited may request evidence. There is a separate permission form in Appendix D

## Safeguarding at Association events

The majority of Association meetings are not regulated activities, but we will adopt the following good practice:-

1. The Association Safeguarding Officer and Young Ringers Coordinator will complete the face to face Leadership Training, as agreed with the Chichester Diocesan Safeguarding Team. 2. It is recommended that two DBS checked adults will be present, unless it is a booked event and it is known that no young people will be present or a parent is present. The DBS certificate must be a Diocesan certificate issued for the purpose of bellringing and District Secretaries will have access to the names of those in their District who have a certificate.

3. DBS certificates are not a qualification and do not guarantee the safety of the adult with respect to young people. The Safeguarding of a meeting is the responsibility of all present.

4. For each young person, a permission to ring form (Appendix E) will be held by the district secretary.

5. Registers of attendance will be kept

## Dealing with Incidents and Known Offenders

### Complaints and Concerns

The Association will deal sympathetically with any complaints of abuse and immediately advise the appropriate authorities as outlined in the safeguarding flowchart (Appendix C). This will normally be the local Parish and Diocesan Safeguarding Officers.

It is at the discretion of the Association to exclude any member (or non-member) from joining in any Association organised activity. The person in charge of the activity has the right to ask any member (or non-member) to leave a practice or event if there are concerns about the said person's conduct. It is recognised that, in the interests of safety, there may be occasions where a trainer makes contact with a learner's hands or arms. Again, in the interests of safety and because bells are loud and corrections need to be made quickly, a person leading ringing may shout instructions but this will not spill over into interactions between ringers when not ringing.

### Known Offenders

Whether coming in the form of established ringers or seeking to become a ringer, any persons known to be on the Sex Offenders Register must not be allowed to engage in a regulated activity as this would be a legal offence.

However, a known offender **may** be able to take part in ringing activities depending upon (a) the nature of their offence, (b) any court restrictions on their activities, (c) perceived risk and (d) the level of supervision that can be afforded.

Both the Church of England and the Police have agreed procedures known as Multiple Agency Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) for dealing with offenders returning to circulate in society. The church position is set out in Section 8 of the House of Bishops document *Protecting all God's Children*.

Any proposal for such a person to be accommodated must be reviewed very seriously with all concerned parties including the incumbent, ringing society and Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and must have due regard to **absolute safety of children** and the reassurance of parents. A written agreement with the church **must** be obtained, this generally is between the individual, the parish and the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

## Background

The background to this policy is provided by:

- Children Act 1989
- Home Office Guidance *Safe from Harm* 1993
- House of Bishops' policy *Protecting All God's Children* 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Church of England Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2018
- Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Safeguarding in Bell Ringing 2019
- Church of England Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework 2021

It should be specially noted that whilst the Church includes "vulnerable adults" in their policies, legal definition is restricted to those under institutional care. Bell ringing activities do not normally come into this category and for practical purposes the following policies are aimed at those under 18 years of age. However, should special circumstances arise involving vulnerable adults then appropriate measures will be applied

### Operation of the Sussex County Association of Change Ringers

The Sussex County Association of Change Ringers covers the diocese of Chichester and is divided into four Districts.

The Association is territorial, and has affiliated towers and membership, to whom this policy applies. The Association is dependent on permission by the owning authorities to allow ringing to take place. This is usually the Church of England, whose powers of control are delegated to the individual Parochial Church Council (PCC).

### Church Requirements and Expectations

The Church of England has issued several documents setting out their requirements for church workers, paid or volunteer, relating to both children under 18 and "vulnerable adults", the latter inclusion is not paralleled by state legislation except in the context of institutions. The principal documents may be referred to through the Church of England website under Safeguarding, these include:

- Promoting a Safer Church
- Practice Guidance series: Safer Recruitment
- Practice Guidance: Safeguarding Training and Development
- Practice Guidance: Risk Assessment for Individuals who may pose Risk
- Parish Safeguarding Handbook

Where a Tower Leader actively teaches or manages young people, the Church requires formal appointment of the post holder by the PCC with a DBS check and undergoing approved Safeguarding Awareness training.

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers has a full text version of updated *Safeguarding in Bell Ringing* on its website www.cccbr.org.uk/safeguarding.

## Application of Principles to the Association

The Association does not normally undertake initial training, nor does it have responsibility for the running of individual towers as a parish activity. Where first stage training is provided suitable safeguarding provision will be made.

However, the Association may run regular separate training events and also regular meetings and social events which host young people involving close contact with the same adults giving scope for familiarity and building relationships the same as for one-to-one training. This close working with children would bring with it the **expectation** that suitably qualified persons be in charge when young people are present. The argument for having "vetted" persons present is that they will be aware of the requirements for overseeing young people, will be able to deal with any problems which may arise and their very presence is a reassurance to parents and guardians. When young people attend Association activities, then the organisers on the day are in effect carrying the same responsibility as a tower captain.

In addition, except where undertaken as a private arrangement, the **pre- arranged** transport of children to a CCCBR activity should involve a DBS checked driver and, wherever possible, a second adult present.

### Association Procedures

The Association will appoint an officer with specific responsibility for Safeguarding issues.

It is recommended that all Association events will have two DBS checked persons present, unless it is a booked event and it is known that no young persons will be attending. The Association will seek to ensure that sufficient persons so qualified are available. Such persons will be appropriate to the location of the event and their registration/checking will normally be achieved through individual ringers' home churches. A request may be made to the individual for sight of their DBS certificate and any certificate of Awareness Training, each of which is issued to the individual but are **not** held by their home Parish.

The Association will keep a register of attendance at all events.

### Operation of the Association across Parish/Diocesan Boundaries

The Church recognises the movement of bell ringers between parishes and across diocesan boundaries and has approved the following:

- Where a person holds a DBS certificate for working with children issued by their parish, this may be used for the same activity (i.e. bell ringing) in other parishes within the same Diocese.

- Where a person wishes to use their DBS certificate for similar work in another Diocese, this is acceptable PROVIDED that the individual is registered for the DBS Update Service. Registration can only take place at the time a new or renewal application is made, there being a 30-day window for registration.

- Once a person is signed up to the update service, their status can be checked by any parish in which they wish to carry out activities and has the added advantage that no future renewal of DBS certificate is necessary.

Applications for DBS check and certification and registration to the Update Service are all free of charge to volunteers.

## Review of Policy

This policy will be kept under review and subject to regular updating, in any event not less than every two years.

**Name Valerie Clay**

**Safeguarding Officer**
**Sussex County Association of Change Ringers**

**Contact** safeguarding@scacr.org.

APPENDIX A This form can be downloaded from https://www.scacr.org

| Permission to ring church bells at<br><br>…….. | |
|---|---|

This group practices on …….. at …….. until

…….. And rings for services on Sundays at …… until

……..……

**Full name of young person ……**

**Date of birth ……..**

**Mobile number (optional)** ……

Is there anything we need to know? Medication / dietary restrictions / allergies / phobias / other?

……

……..……

……

…….. **Parent or Guardian's details and consent**

Name

……

…….…… Address

……

…….…. Phone number ……. Mobile number

……..

Email address ……

Name and mobile number of alternative contact in case of emergencies

……

……..……

**Permissions.** Please indicate your permission for each

| | |
|---|---|
| | I give my permission for my child to attend the group and take part in its normal activities |
| | I understand what is involved and I am aware of the hazards present |
| | I understand that separate permission will be sought for additional outings and activities |
| | My child will be brought to / collected from the group by a parent or known adult |
| | My child has permission to travel to / from the group alone or as part of a friendship group |

**Photography permission**

We may like to video / photograph your child at the tower. We follow national guidelines and only use first names for all under 18s in any use of photography. We only post on social media AFTER the event. These are to be used for the following purposes (please indicate your permission for each):

| | |
|---|---|
| | Training (videos will be deleted immediately after use / feedback has been given) |
| | Publicity (parish publications, local press, Sussex County Association of Change Ringers publications, Ringing World) |
| | Website (parish website and scacr.org) |
| | Social media |

**Signature of parent or guardian ……..**

**Date ……..**

# APPENDIX B

# Good Practice Checklist

## Good Practice for Maintaining a Safe Environment in the Belfry

1. Parents' consent in writing should be sought prior to commencing events or meetings and they should be made aware, in advance, of the content and arrangements for such activities. Any medical conditions of the child should be established in advance as should the agreement that the parents are responsible for delivering and collecting the child.

2. If there is a child who it is believed is at immediate risk of harm, call the emergency services on 999 and then inform appropriate Safeguarding Officer. Any behaviour of adult ringers which gives cause for concern should be dealt with by their removal from the immediate activity and may need to be discussed with an appropriate agency.

3. Keep an attendance register, which all attendees must sign, so that everyone is aware who was present at any given time.

4. Children must be supervised at all times and should only be allowed into hazardous locations, such as the bell chamber, when accompanied by the local Tower Captain / Deputy or Assistant.

5. Always have two adults (preferably one of each gender) present whenever children/young people are ringing or being supervised, taught or transported.

6. Touching should be only that appropriate for teaching, supervision and/or in an emergency. Those helping children by ringing another bell or standing nearby should be aware of the need to protect personal space.

7. Relevant health and safety procedures should be followed and first aid available.

8. Local tower arrangements should always be approved by the PCC in line with the Parish Safeguarding Policy. The Tower Captain should have a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and ensure that Council has access to it.

9. Ensure that the appropriate insurance is in place prior to any teaching, training or ringing session.

10. All local ringing societies should appoint a Safeguarding Officer, someone who can oversee the performance of safeguarding matters in their area.

11. Good liaison should be established with Tower Captains and PCCs and between the Safeguarding Officers of local societies and the Parish and Diocesan Safeguarding staff.

12. Please note that it is the responsibility of all visiting groups to ensure that those leading/supervising a group have had all relevant checks and it is not the responsibility of the host church, unless the host church is providing the leader/supervisor for a visiting group. All visiting groups should have a copy of this General Statement on Safeguarding Towers in relation to children available to them.

Copies of this form can be downloaded from the Association website

https://www.scacr.org

APPENDIX C A copy of this form can be downloaded from the Association website

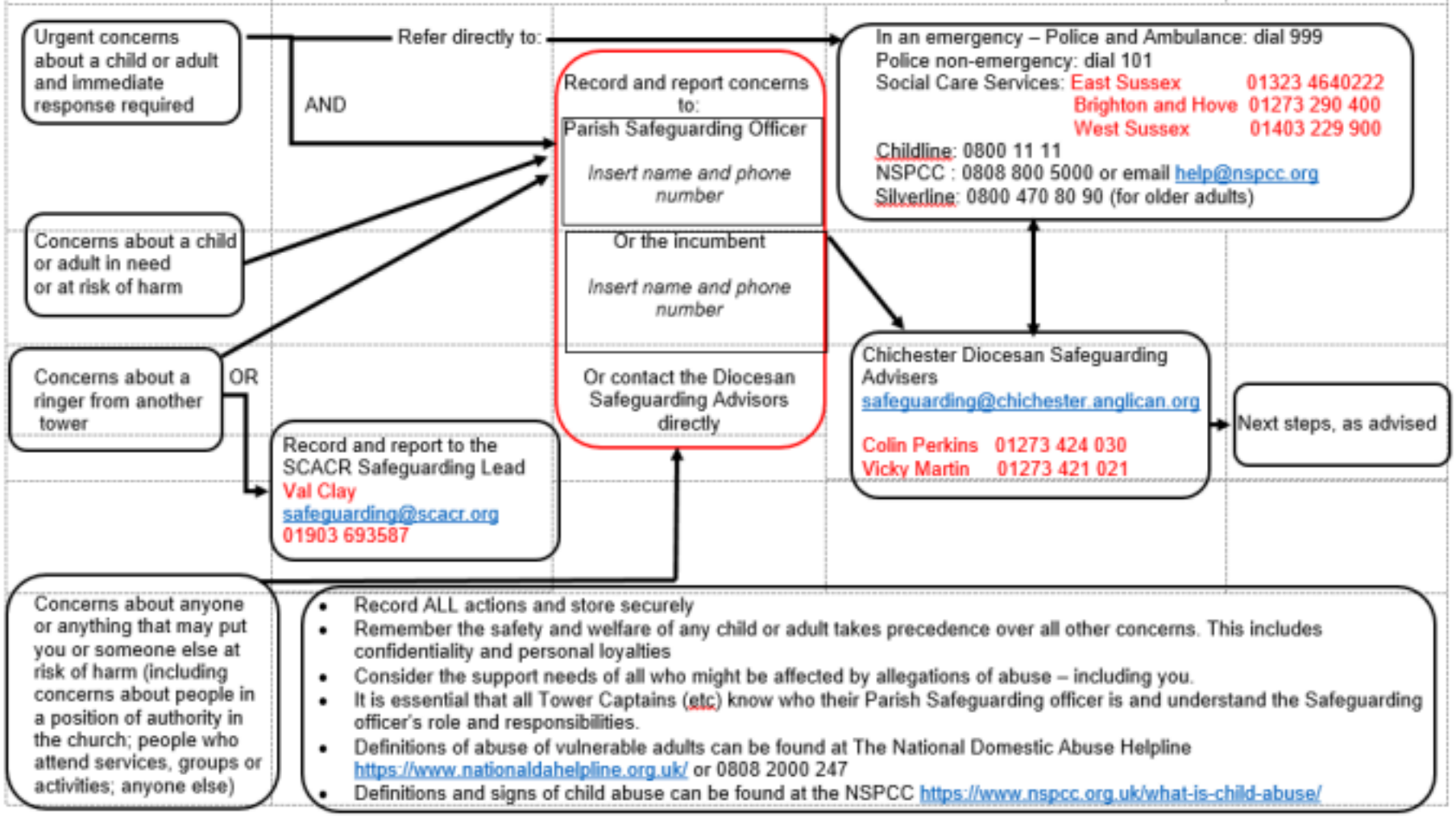
APPENDIX D

This form can be downloaded from https://www.scacr.org

SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

# Safeguarding Information for Ringers

Produced by The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and
Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers



# Permission to take part in additional activities

A typical activity would be a ringing outing or a purely social event such as a meal

Details of the activity (a risk assessment is available for inspection)

……

……

……..

**Full name of young person ……**

**Date of birth ……..**

**Mobile number (optional)** ……..

Is there anything we need to know? Medication / dietary restrictions / allergies / phobias / other?

……

……..……

……

……..…….. **Parent or Guardian's details and consent**

Name

……

……..…… Address

……

……..….. Phone number ……. Mobile number

……..

Email address …….

Name and mobile number of alternative contact in case of emergencies

……

……..…….

**Permissions.** Please indicate your permission for each

| | |
|---|---|
| | I give my permission for my child to take part in the activity described above |
| | I understand what is involved and I am aware of the hazards present |
| | My child will be brought to / collected from the group by a parent or known adult |
| | My child has permission to travel with the group during this activity |
| | My child has permission to travel to / from the group alone or as part of a friendship group |

**Photography permission**

We may like to video / photograph your child at the tower. We follow national guidelines and only use first names for all under 18s in any use of photography. We only post on social media AFTER the event. These are to be used for the following purposes

(please indicate your permission for each):

| | |
|---|---|
| | Training (videos will be deleted immediately after use / feedback has been given) |
| | Publicity (parish publications, local press, Sussex County Association of Change Ringers publications, Ringing World) |
| | Website (parish website and scacr.org) |
| | Social media |

**Signature of parent or guardian …….. Date**

…….. APPENDIX E This form can be downloaded from

https://www.scacr.org

## Permission to take part in SCACR county and district events
## Note: the Sussex Young Ringers Group has separate forms

SCACR organises practices, often with refreshments, in towers across East and West Sussex, Brighton and Hove. These may sometimes involve a church service and / or business meeting and are occasionally purely social e.g. a walk.

**Full name of young person ……**

**Date of birth ……..**

**Mobile number (optional)** …….

Is there anything we need to know? Medication / dietary restrictions / allergies / phobias / other?

……

……

……

…….. **Parent or Guardian's details and consent**

Name

……

…….. Address

……

…….. Phone number ……. Mobile number ……..

Email address …….

Name and mobile number of alternative contact in case of emergencies

……
…….

**Permissions.** Please indicate your permission for each

| | |
|---|---|
| | I give my permission for my child to attend the group and take part in its normal activities |
| | I understand what is involved and I am aware of the hazards present |

| | |
|---|---|
| | I understand that separate permission will be sought for additional outings and activities |
| | My child will be brought to / collected from the group by a parent or known adult |
| | My child has permission to travel to / from the group alone or as part of a friendship group |

**Photography permission**

We may like to video / photograph your child at the tower. We follow national guidelines and only use first names for all under 18s in any use of photography. We only post on social media AFTER the event. These are to be used for the following purposes (please indicate your permission for each):

| | |
|---|---|
| | Training (videos will be deleted immediately after use / feedback has been given) |
| | Publicity (parish publications, local press, Sussex County Association of Change Ringers publications, Ringing World) |
| | Website (parish website and scacr.org) |
| | Social media |

**Signature of parent or guardian ……..**

**Date ……..**