



Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

Approved by Trustees: May 2022

This document covers the policies and procedures for work with Vulnerable Adults and is part of the overall Safeguarding Policies for both Adults and Children. Safeguarding at the Vine is overseen and operationally managed by those listed below. They are responsible for both Adult and Children safeguarding. Therefore, there is a degree of synergy between this policy and the Children Safeguarding Policy. This policy acknowledges the range and scope of adult vulnerability but is not exhaustive. The Trustees have approved this document and it is accepted and endorsed by the Elders. It draws on good practice guidance provided by ThirtyOne; Eight (31:8 – formerly CCPAS) and requirements of relevant legislation.

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VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Care Act (2014, for further reading see appendices) defines vulnerable adults as persons 18 or over:

- Having need for care and support
- Are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, because of these needs
- Are unable to protect themselves from either the risk or experience of abuse

Vulnerability can lead to disempowerment and a feeling of helplessness. It is important to recognise that some vulnerable adults are assailed by multiple problems/issues and some are vulnerable because of the lasting damage caused by historic factors. However, it is also important to recognise that for some, vulnerability can be short term and linked to a specific life event.

Freedom of choice v's duty to act

This Policy acknowledges that individuals have freedom to make their own choices. We may in the course of our work with vulnerable adults see a preferred pathway or choice that would best serve their circumstances but the freedom to choose not to follow, or only partially follow, any proposed options rests with the individual. In essence we seek to maintain the dignity of the individual and not to do something for someone that they can do themselves. Our heart should be to empower individuals to maintain control and make good choices.

In attempting to provide care and help to vulnerable people, we recognise that where individuals make irrational choices that either endanger them or others or are contrary to law, we have to inform other agencies who can protect them from themselves or others. We recognise this could breach any confidentiality agreements that have been made in the course of pastoral work and could adversely affect the relationship we have with the individual. This policy is designed to reflect any relevant legislation (see appendices), good practice guidance provided by recognised statutory bodies or others who may assist churches (such as ThirtyOne; Eight - 31:8) or any principles that assist in the delivery of effective safeguarding to any vulnerable individual or group.

Care and Support

The Church Leadership, defined for this purpose as the Elders and Directors/Trustees (hereafter referred to as CL), recognises the importance of its care and support of Vulnerable Adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all Adults that it serves.

As part of its mission, the Church is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting Vulnerable Adults and their own choices as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Protecting Vulnerable Adults from maltreatment.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all those who are employed or who volunteer within the church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Supporting those who have been affected by abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting carers.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities and other organisations.
- Keeping policies and procedures up to date, with an annual review as a minimum.
- Keeping the CL informed of issues, albeit while retaining any required confidentiality.

- The key principles of decision making for vulnerable adults, contained in the Care Act 2014 and supported by the CL are:
 - Empowerment
 - Prevention
 - Proportionality
 - Protection
 - Partnership
 - Accountability

The safeguarding and care of Vulnerable Adults is everyone's business at the Vine; all have a role to play.

The CL is committed to on-going Safeguarding training and will regularly review the operational guidelines surrounding care and support of Vulnerable Adults.

A range of external charities, statutory agencies and not for profit organisations provide additional support and help for Vulnerable adults. It is helpful for us and a role for the CL to be aware as much as possible of the range of local provision available. This is a key task specifically for the trustee who acts as safeguarding lead on the Trustee Board. It is also vital that this information is available to the CL and the DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) tasked with the operational delivery of this policy.

For the sake of clarity and for the purposes of this policy, an Adult is any person over the age of 18.

ABUSE, NEGLECT, EXPLOITATION AND SELF HARM

Regrettably abuse happens in our society and we need to be aware of the dangers, signs and concerns and be able to respond appropriately and adequately. It is acknowledged that Vulnerable Adults can be abused, exploited or neglected in a family or in a church community setting, usually by someone known to them or, less commonly, by a stranger. Often people involved in abusing or harming a Vulnerable Adult are in a position of trust or have a position of power or perceived authority over them – this could include spiritual leaders and those with authority or positions in a church setting. Another area of vulnerability is self-harming, threats of suicide or attempts at suicide. These are often the result of wider vulnerability and mental health issues. Acts of omission are also a form of abuse often resulting in neglect or negligence in terms of duty of care.

The procedures outlined later in this document specify the action to be taken if it is suspected that an adult may be being abused, exploited, neglected or self-harming.

Categories of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional / Psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial exploitation
- Institutional / Organised abuse
- Discriminatory Abuse
- Neglect
- Self-Harm

Other forms of abuse can include peer-to-peer (bullying), sexual exploitation, honour-based violence, radicalisation and domestic violence.

IMPACT OF LIFE EVENTS

We will also be alert to the potential need for adult statutory help (see below) for an adult who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs and or has special educational needs
- is a carer for others but is vulnerable themselves
- is showing signs of mental health issues or concerns, inc. self-harm
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the Adult such as substance misuse, finance or debt issues, relationship or marriage difficulties – this is not an exhaustive list.
- is showing early signs of abuse of others or neglect of others or self

POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy and our Children's Safeguarding Policy work in concert with each other, being overseen and managed by the same team. The policy is part of a suite of policies that work in unison with each other, in particular the Lone Working, Recruitment, Health and Safety and Data Protection policies. Please refer to them for extended guidance where applicable.

Key People

A trustee has been given delegated authority to oversee the Vulnerable Adults safeguarding framework and operation. Regular reports are provided to the CL via a standing item at Trustee Board meetings while maintaining necessary confidentiality. Reports are also provided to Elders meetings. Overall responsibility for safeguarding remains with all Trustees.

In addition, the church has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who act as the focus for any day-to-day issues and concerns that may arise. They serve as a first port of call for anyone to talk to.

Contact details for all key staff are on page 1.

External Links

Links with relevant agencies – in particular 31:8 and the Police - are fostered and maintained. The intention is to ensure that the Vine is provided with continuing general and specific advice when needed and to facilitate any reporting of concerns to the appropriate authorities.

Records

A range of records are maintained in a secure manner and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and encapsulated in the Data Protection Act 2018. These are:

- **Workers (paid and unpaid):** application forms, self-declaration forms, reference forms, DBS check details, summary of DBS workers (provided semi-annually to the trustees).
- **Groups:** Group membership lists are maintained by the church office on ChurchSuite, where applicable
- **Concerns:** records relating to concerns raised and actions taken.

- **Accidents:** accident books.
- **Minutes:** of meetings of the Trustee Board and Members meetings, although the detail of individual vulnerable adult issues is rarely discussed
- **Reports:** to the Charity Commission (annual return in report and accounts) as well as the required annual return where the Vine is required to indicate if there have been any reportable incidents
- **Health data:** for group trips offsite. (See form in Appendices)

Recruitment – for all staff (employed or volunteers)

Safe recruitment is a vital component of safeguarding (flow chart in appendices).

Appointment first has to be approved in principle by the elders (based on the “know the person” principle). Then, the formal part of the appointment process (application forms, self-declaration forms, reference requests, DBS checks) is undertaken.

Once all forms references and the DBS check are completed, a decision is taken to finalise the appointment process. This decision is taken by the Human Resource trustees in conjunction with the safeguarding delegated trustee and the Elders and will include a risk assessment if the DBS check contains any issues. Only when that decision is taken and all aspects of the recruitment process completed, will the individual be permitted to be placed on the list of workers for a group, added to any rotas or employed in a paid or voluntary capacity. (See Appendices for Flow Chart.)

It should be noted that DBS checks at an enhanced level are only provided in relation to adults in specific circumstances. However, it is good practice and our policy to ensure a basic level of check of DBS status is undertaken in all positions where a degree of trust is being placed by the CL in the individual. This protects those individuals who may be vulnerable to potential abuse or exploitation, the wider church family and the Vine from inappropriate appointments through proactive due diligence.

Whistle-blowing

The CL encourages whistle-blowing so that any concerns about an employee or volunteer can be brought to the attention of the CL. Concerns or issues may be raised with anyone who has a position in the CL (either an Elder or a Trustee). They must deal with the issue or concerns raised by contacting a member of the safeguarding team unless there is a conflict of interest. In some circumstances it may be necessary to speak to the Chair of Trustees. Whilst others can be approached, we would strongly encourage concerns to be raised with the DSLs or Safeguarding Trustee directly.

It is important to keep the circle of disclosure small and to seek external advice from 31:8 or police or social services as necessary. Once this has been enacted – any further disclosure should follow the advice given – it should be noted that this may restrict the wider CL (Elders or Trustees) having information until it is appropriate to do so. All actions whilst safeguarding investigations are underway in conjunction with other statutory agencies will be recorded.

Any requirement to suspend staff or volunteers will be enacted by the Trustee with Safeguarding responsibility, Chair of Trustees and Head of Human Resources (2 out of 3 if one is unavailable). The Elders and Trustees will be informed and consulted, if this is appropriate and sanctioned by the investigating statutory authority.

If, after an assessment, an individual is suspended, removed or dismissed from responsibilities or a role within the Vine, the Disclosure & Barring Service will be informed if required. Throughout this process, there is a need to maintain confidentiality and to ensure fairness while also maintaining the safety of any person at risk.

Adults Moving Away

If an Adult about whom concerns have been raised or where safeguarding related questions have come to the fore, moves to another church, that church will be informed where possible and after discussion with 31:8.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should anyone carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse:

Concerns, suspicions and allegations must be reported as soon as possible to one of the church's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL/Deputy DSL) (see page 1) who are appointed by the CL to act on its behalf in dealing with any allegation or suspicion of abuse, etc.

Disclosure to the wider CL (Trustees and or Elders) is a difficult and sometimes emotive issue. The policy reflects the need for the CL to be informed of any concerns or issues in order to generally perform its duties of good governance and oversight. In an ideal world this needs to be done as soon as possible. This is to ensure good compliance with policies and so that clear accountability and support can be provided to all those involved – potential victims, family, friends, perpetrators, those reporting concerns or those involved with safeguarding responsibilities.

However, it is also acknowledged that each set of circumstances is unique and it is vital that advice from 31:8 or other statutory agencies is sought and followed. That advice and actions required may restrict the dissemination of any information to the wider CL. As a general rule of thumb this policy sets the following priorities:

1. Safety of the individual, support and pastoral care as appropriate
2. Support of any individual, family or friends bringing concerns, disclosure or allegation (this does not imply ongoing commentary on what is happening once the matter has been passed to the safeguarding team or others to follow through)
3. Support and pastoral input for the alleged perpetrator (if they are part of the church)
4. Consideration of any implications for the church in terms of reputation or credibility
5. Confidentiality issues included risks around potential collusion accusations

There is also a requirement to inform the church's insurance provider if a proven allegation has been made against an individual within the church or if an incident occurs on church premises.

If the suspicions or allegations implicate the DSL or other members of the safeguarding team then the report should be made in the first instance to the delegated Vine trustee (contact information is found on page 1).

If the suspicions or allegations concern a trustee or elder the delegated trustee should be informed and they will work with the chair of trustees and seek further advice from 31:8 or other statutory agencies as appropriate. If either the delegated trustee or chair of trustees is implicated then another elder or trustee can be substituted.

If none of these are available, advice can be sought from 31:8 (formerly Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)) and KCC Adult Social Services. Contact details are on page 1

Suspicious must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

A written record of the concerns should be made at the earliest opportunity and kept in a secure place before being passed to a DSL or Deputy DSL or delegated trustee.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the DSL or the Deputy DSLs, the absence of these individuals should not delay seeking advice from 31:8 or KCC Adult Social Services or police if there is an immediate risk to an individual or family.

It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the Vulnerable Adult protection agencies or seek advice from 31:8, although the CL hopes that members of the church will use the church's procedure in the first instance. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the DSL, Deputy DSLs, delegated trustee, trustees or elders have not responded appropriately or where they have a disagreement as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct. By making this statement the CL demonstrates the commitment of the church to effective safeguarding and its absolute desire for a fully robust process that minimises the possibility of bad practice, collusion or allegations of cover up.

The CL will support the DSL and Deputy DSLs in their roles 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.

The DSL group will meet together at least quarterly to review issues relating to safeguarding, to provide insights into process and to forward any concerns about the policy for consideration to the relevant trustees.

If an accusation is made against a worker, paid or voluntary, that individual's role in any area of ministry will be reviewed and suspension from involvement will be considered. The role of the DSL and Deputy DSLs is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion. Consultation with 31:8 and/or KCC Adult Social Services should be undertaken and advice duly followed including any disclosure to wider CL.

It is the statutory agencies task to investigate the matter if formal referral is made.

WHERE ABUSE IS SUSPECTED OR ALLEGED

Where a child or adult makes an allegation of abuse:

- Stay calm, listen carefully to what is being said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets under any circumstances.
- Allow the person to continue at his/her own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking leading questions.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Do not be judgemental.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.

- Record in writing what was said using the person's own words as soon as possible, note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- Pass this information on immediately as indicated above.
- If a person has disclosed abuse, consideration should be given to whether or not it is safe for a person to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions, and particularly if the DSL or a Deputy DSL is not available, it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Maidstone Adult Social Services or the Police to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN CHURCH GROUPS AND PASTORAL MEETINGS

We aim to protect people from abuse and our team members from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines:

- Record any unusual events and any accidents will be written into the accident book. (Note: there is an accident book in every church building).
- Where possible we would advise that we should not see people alone, although we recognise that there may be times when this may be necessary or helpful. Pastoral conversations often take place on a 1:1 basis and whilst this is not prohibited by this policy it is essential that due diligence with regard to risks is assessed and appropriate safeguards put in place. Where possible alert another leader that a conversation is taking place and place yourself clearly in a place where you can be easily observed. Follow the Lone Working policy, in particular if visiting someone at home. Where you do not know the person concerned, meeting in a public place such as a café should be pursued.
- Ensure gender issues are assessed and due consideration given to ensuring someone of the same sex is present during meetings. If this raises an issue because elders are male then ensuring the person(s) being seen have appropriate support such as a friend or spouse in attendance if they so wish.
- Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- Be aware of your surroundings, particularly of any health and safety issues present. If the latter cannot be addressed quickly and easily, advise the health & safety officer as soon as possible (see Page 1).

Further guidance can be found in the Lone Working policy.

SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE

The CL is committed to offering pastoral care and support, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, to those attending the church who have been affected by abuse. If support is being provided, the CL will ensure appropriate supervision and oversight will be put in place. It is not possible to provide a definite pathway of support as each person is unique and their connections to us are ultimately relational. That said we would encourage connections to the eldership team, and community group leaders. We would encourage all members of the church to be connected to and members of a community group. There is also a pastoral team with elder membership and oversight who are able to specifically support individuals requiring additional support and care.

WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

When someone attending the church is known to have previous offending history, the CL will work with the offender, to review the relevance of the offending on the church community as a whole, consider likelihood of further offending, identify any risk areas for the church, its members and the wider public we engage. A risk assessment plan will be drawn up, enacted and reviewed regularly (as a minimum every three months).

The CL will ensure that where possible it both cooperates and seeks advice and guidance from statutory agencies.

In its commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults and to protect the abuser pastorally, boundaries will be set for that person, which they will be expected to keep. There is a duty to cooperate with statutory authorities where there is a known risk. The church retains the right to agree or decline involvement of an individual in the church.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is overseen by the Elders and is intrinsically linked to our safeguarding policies (both Child and Adult). Policies lay out the process and expectations of everyone to respond in a timely and appropriate way. Additional pastoral support is also required to support those raising concerns, those suffering from alleged or actual abuse, family and other friends affected by any issues and for the team overseeing and managing safeguarding work at the Vine. This is often complex and with overlapping and sometimes, conflicting pastoral needs. Whilst pastoral structures such as community groups, 1:1 pastoral support from Elders or other leaders and connections to external support groups can help, each situation is unique and requires timely planning, regular review and operational flexibility to respond to changing need(s).

The Elders welcome direct pastoral contact with those in need so that they can assist in supporting them. There is also a small pastoral group with elder oversight that meets to consider how pastoral care can be best delivered across the Vine and in individual situations. Community groups are also overseen by elders and regular conversations with those leaders that facilitate these groups take place, to look at support needs for individuals and those that are caring within a community group.

A pastoral care diagram can be found in the appendices. It is not prescriptive as individual situations require an individual response but it does provide a framework from which we at the Vine operate.

SUPPORT AND TRAINING

The CL is committed to the provision of safeguarding training for all leaders, staff and volunteers who have any contact in any ministry capacity.

Everyone has to undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding protection effectively, which is kept up to date by refresher training at least annually.

We will provide leaders with the opportunity to contribute to and shape safeguarding arrangements and policy by taking into account leaders' views and personal safeguarding experiences. There is a responsibility for us all to share good practice and to reflect, change and adapt practice that falls short of providing the care and support we expect from this policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding are sensitive and are only discussed with the individual and with others who need to know.

The DSL or Deputy DSLs, delegated safeguarding trustee, elders or trustees will disclose personal information to one another on a need-to-know basis only.

Data obtained for one purpose should not be used for a different purpose.

In complying with our Data Protection policy and the requirements of GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, we are committed to ensuring that safeguarding concerns and allegations are reported – this may from time-to-time conflict with an individual right to expect confidential discussions to be kept confidential.

COMMITMENT OF THE ELDERS AND TRUSTEES

The CL is committed to safeguarding practices which protect adults from harm; this commitment is shared by all those who lead or work across the life of the church.

The trustees have formally approved this policy and it is accepted by the whole CL.

The trustees will ensure that this Safeguarding Policy is fully reviewed and/or revised on an annual basis or sooner if required

This policy will be made available to all who work or volunteer and is freely available on request.

Appendices

Legislation

Further legislative information can be found at:

Care Act (2014) Part 1 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents

Mental Capacity Act (2005) www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents

Sexual offences Act (2003) www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents

Fraud Act (2006) www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/35/contents

Data Protection Act (2018) www.gov.uk/data-protection

Further Reading & Reference:

Mental Health www.mind.org.uk/information-support/

Domestic violence www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse

www.womensaid.org.uk

www.refuge.org.uk

Financial scamming and fraud – The National Fraud and Cyber Crime Reporting Centre

www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-fraud-and-cyber-crime

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – National helpline 0800 121700

www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/

Radicalisation and Extremist Terrorist Activity

www.gov.uk/governmentpublications/channel-guidance

Institutional abuse – concerns re care in care settings

www.cqc.org.uk/file/4731

The National Centre for Post Qualifying Social Work and Professional Practice

Safeguarding Adults – Guidance for Christian Faith Organisations (published 2019) in conjunction with Jubilee + and Bournemouth University

www.ncpqsw.com

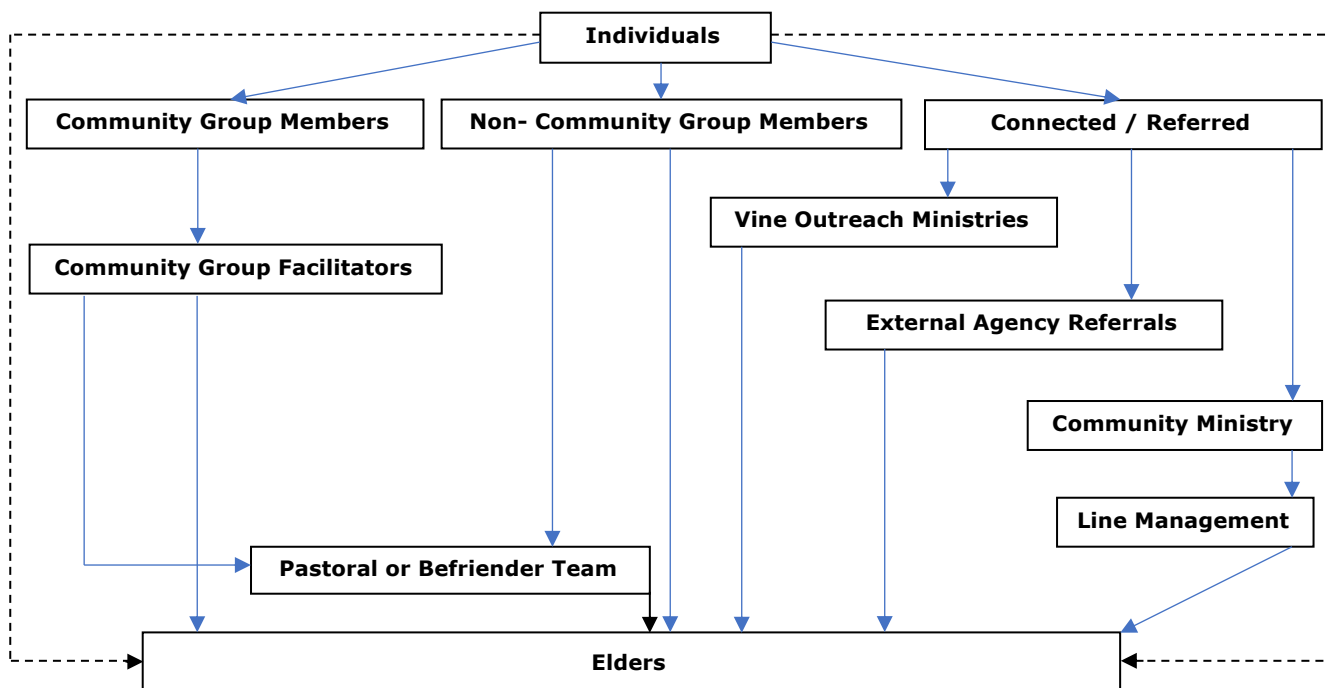
Pastoral & Ministry Pathways

The flow chart below is an indication of the type of pathways that Individuals come into contact with the Vine and how our pastoral framework meets general care needs. All pastoral care is overseen by the elders although pastoral work is often delivered by other delegated groups or individuals. The key is that anyone who comes into contact with the Vine has access to the eldership team for pastoral care and support.

There are 3 broad access points. These are:

1. Those individuals and families who are members of the Vine and connected to a Community Group. We would generally see the primary route for pastoral care to be delivered via the Community Group itself and those that facilitate these groups. Additional support for areas of pastoral care that cannot be delivered in this way is provided via a Pastoral Team and the elders.
2. Non-Community Group members who are members of the Vine can access pastoral support via the pastoral team or elders. We do encourage all members of the Vine however to be connected to a community group.
3. The Vine also provides pastoral care to individuals and families who are not member of the Vine. This is often via community ministries such as Oasis or Christians Against Poverty. It could also be delivered as part of Vine outreach ministries such as Alpha. The Vine also accepts referrals from other agencies, both statutory (such as schools or criminal justice agencies) or from other voluntary sector partners.

It is important to note that whilst we undertake pastoral work, support and advocacy, we recognise that others are more qualified to deliver specific areas such as counselling, particularly when people are vulnerable and in need of additional professional support. Assisting and helping people to maintain access to appropriate external services is very much part of our overall pastoral approach in serving those in crisis or difficulty.





ADULT OFFSITE EVENT

Health Declaration

The purpose of this form is to provide the leaders of an event organised by the Vine with relevant information should there be a health incident that requires medical treatment.

Event Details:

Event Organiser(s):

Date of Event:

Name **Tel No**

Emergency Contacts

• Name Tel No

• Name Tel No

Health Information

Please indicate below any medical conditions, medication or allergies that we would need to know about in the event of an emergency.

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Data Protection

The Vine's privacy policy summarizes the Vine's approach to collecting personal data and it is recommended that you read it. It is available on the Vine's website: www.thevineuk.net

Personal data collected on this form is solely for the purpose stated above and will be retained confidentially and securely by the Vine appointed event leaders.

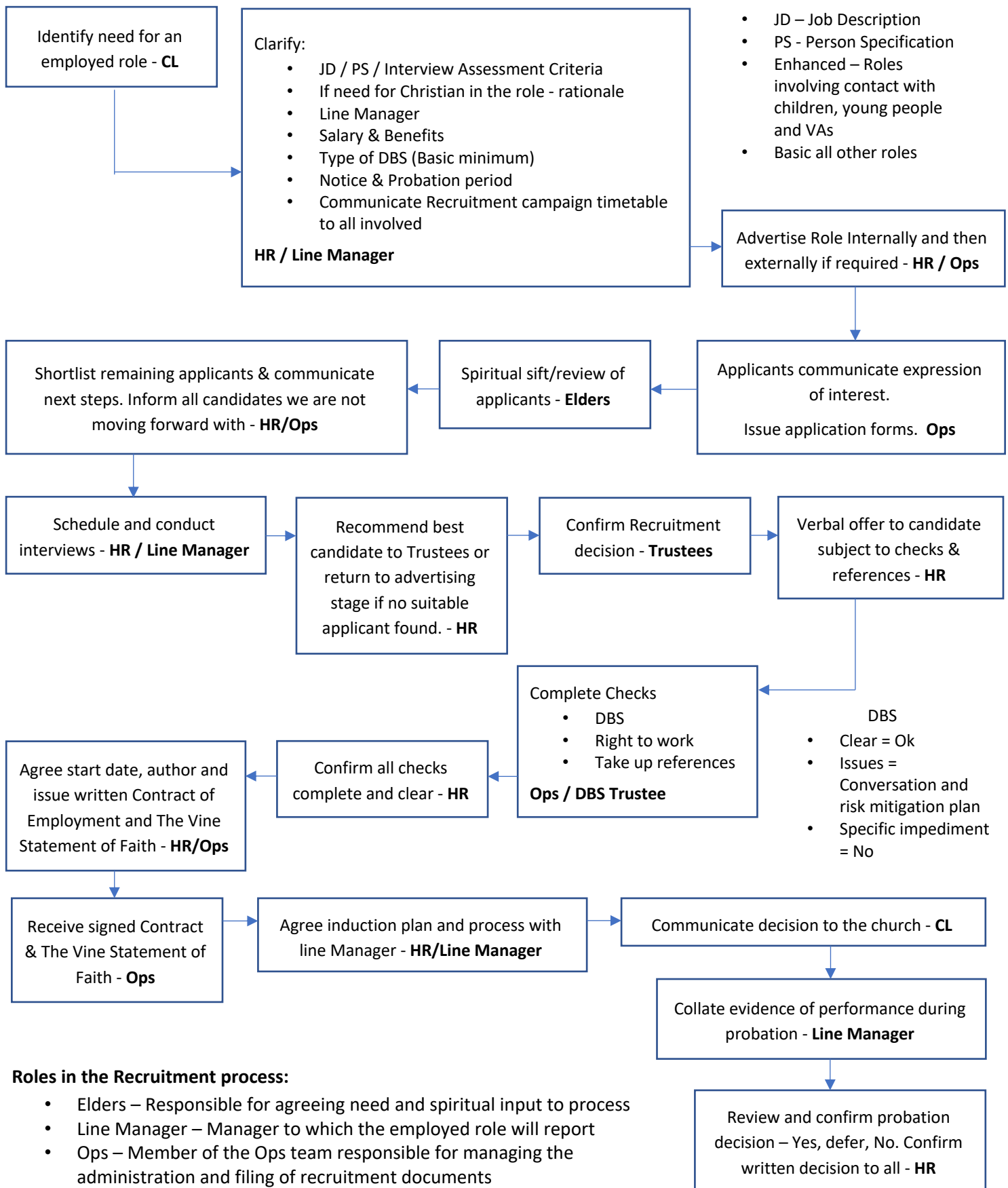
Please note that information on this form will not be shared by the leaders of the event to anyone except the emergency services and then only if required. This form will be shredded a month after the event in question has been completed.

By signing below, you provide permission for the data to be collected and retained.

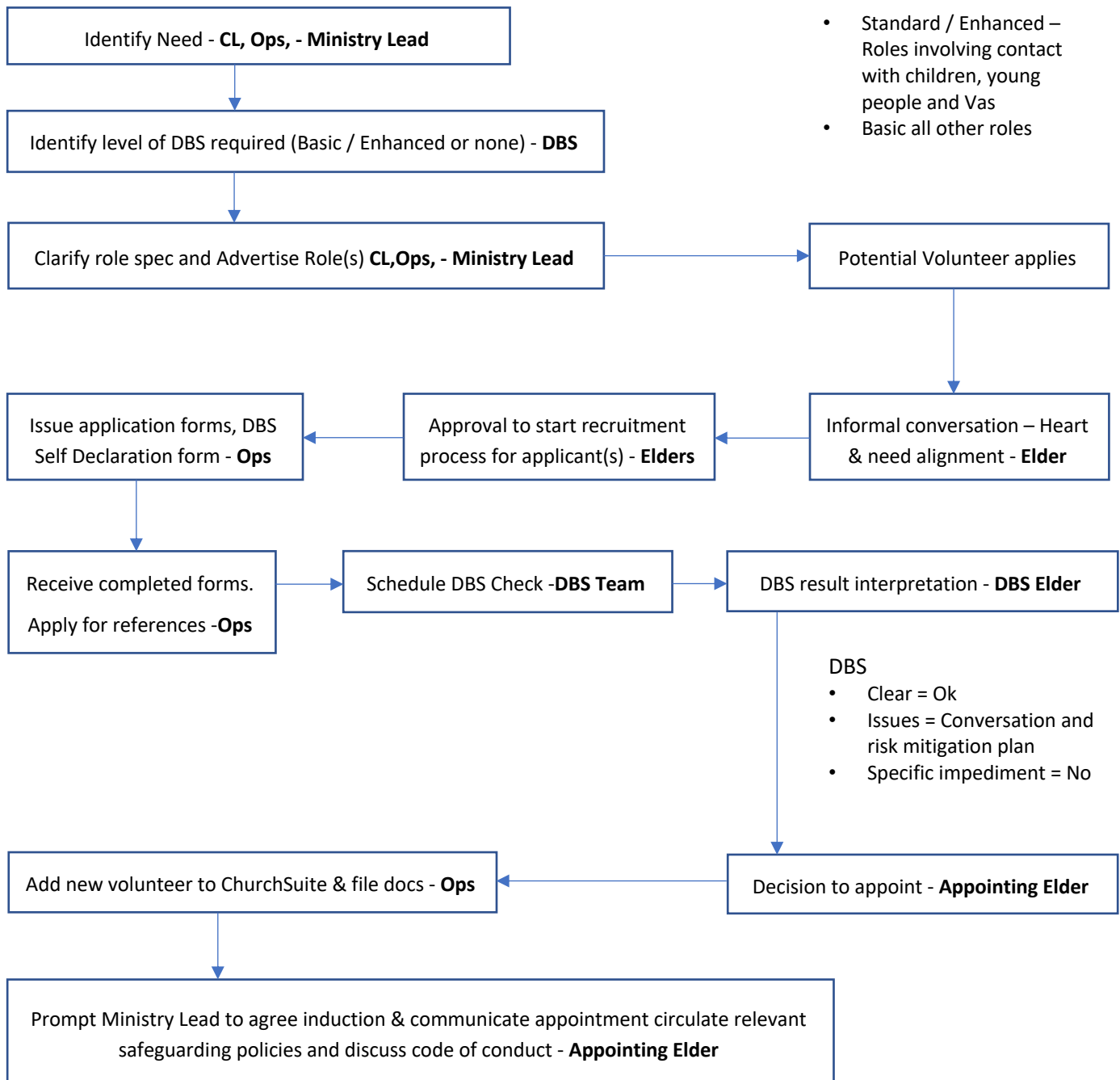
Signature **Date**

Form approved: 5/22

The Vine – Employed Recruitment Process – 21/5/22



The Vine – Volunteer Recruitment Process – 21/5/22



Roles in the Recruitment process:

- Appointing Elder – responsible for deciding and confirming appointment of new volunteers
- Elders – Responsible for agreeing need and spiritual input to process
- Ministry Leads – Leading the area of ministry into which volunteers are needed
- Ops – Member of the Ops team responsible for managing the Volunteer administration and filing of documents
- CL (Church Leadership Team) comprising Elders and Trustees