

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Swansea and Gower Circuit

The Methodist Church, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable are paramount.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit fully agrees with the Connexional statement reiterated in *Creating Safer Space 2007*:

As the people of the Methodist Church we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community of all ages.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust. It commits itself to providing pastoral care to those in need, including the supervision of those who have committed criminal offences.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Connexional Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the circuit and in the churches.

The Swansea and Gower Circuit commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

Purpose

The purposes of this safeguarding policy are to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the Methodist Safeguarding Handbook (2010).

The Swansea and Gower Circuit appoints a Safeguarding Adults and Children Coordinator and supports the incumbent in this role.

a) Roles and responsibilities

Superintendent

1. Ensure all churches have appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policies in place.
2. Support those in pastoral charge in exercising responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding policy and practice.
3. Ensure the provision of pastoral support for those involved in issues of abuse and in management of sex offenders.

4. Ensure training opportunities are in place for all workers with children, vulnerable adults, for staff of the circuit and for members of the local churches in the circuit.
5. Ensure the Circuit Meeting appoints a Safeguarding Coordinator and that the details of that person are passed to the District office.
6. Ensure the Circuit Meeting reviews this policy annually.
7. Support the Safeguarding Coordinator in their work, providing access to resources to enable them to fulfil their functions.

Circuit Stewards

Ensure agreed procedures are in place for Circuit and ecumenical events that involve children or vulnerable adults.

Circuit Safeguarding Coordinators

1. Support and advise the Circuit Superintendent and the Circuit Stewards in fulfilling their roles.
2. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues.
3. Liaise with the District Safeguarding Group(s).
4. With the support of the Superintendent ensure that any incidents and allegations are followed up or referred as necessary.

b) Procedures for circuit events involving children or vulnerable adults

It is essential that circuit events that involve children or vulnerable adults do not slip through the net because they are not owned by one church.

c) Responsibility for those planning and leading the event

All those involved in leading and running the event must be aware of the procedure.

The event should have been planned effectively and attention given to the following issues:

- Risk assessment and suitability of the activity and the premises.
- The appointment of a team to take charge of the event, who will ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place.
- Numbers of children or vulnerable adults involved.
- Transportation following good practice guidelines.

d) Key concepts and definitions

i) Vulnerable Adults: any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of her or himself, or to protect her or himself from significant harm or exploitation.

ii) Safeguarding and protecting children or vulnerable adults from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.

iii) Adult/child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.

iv) Abuse and neglect may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

Dated

Signed Chair of Circuit Meeting

This policy was agreed at the Circuit Meeting held on 17th March 2016. It will be reviewed annually.

Report of Local Preachers' and Worship Leaders' Meeting Reynoldston
March 7th

1. 24 members attended
2. Various pastoral concerns from a round the Circuit were noted
3. Congratulations were given to Cynthia Mumford on her accreditation as a Local Preacher
4. Favourable reports were received about Cerys Davies (on note), and Sue Raad and Caroline Buckler (both on trial). Due largely to his commitment to Ogof Adullam, Huw Davies asked that his training be put on hold for the present.
5. Rev John Atkinson is to lead a small group of assessors
6. Reports were received on Ogof Adullam and the Night Shelter.
7. Theology Lectures, LP Study groups and preaching resources were noted.
8. The meeting concluded with a discussion on migration.

Briefing Paper for Circuit Meeting: The Future of Penlan Methodist Church

1. Introduction

Penlan Methodist Church has served the local community for 50 years, but in its present form has become unsustainable. The small fellowship which meets there for worship will move to Wesley Methodist Church (Eaton Road) once the planned building work at Wesley is completed, around early July 2016. A team is proposed to assess options and deliver a plan for the future of the Penlan Church building.

2. Future Vision

A vision statement is required for the future of the Methodist Church mission in the Penlan area. This needs to be considered in the context of the Swansea City Centre mission work which is already under way at Brunswick Methodist Church, supported by the Swansea & Gower Methodist Circuit. A clear vision for Penlan will facilitate the right decisions going forward to implement the Plan

3. Brunswick Church mission

Brunswick Church is located 3 miles South of Penlan.

The Brunswick Church mission already includes the following activities:-

- Ogof Adullam (drop-in Centre for vulnerable adults)
- Support for Prison Fellowship (by providing a meeting place)
- Swansea Asylum Seekers Group (by providing a meeting place)
- Feasibility Study on possible provision of Recovery Housing for Ogof guests.

Whilst Penlan is a separate community from the City Centre, it is important that Swansea & Gower Methodist Circuit should not attempt to set up two separate competing projects, or over-extend its available resources.

4. Use of Penlan building

The Penlan Church building is currently used for several non-Church community activities. Whilst these provide a regular income, this would currently be insufficient to cover the operating and maintenance costs of the building.

Future Options for Penlan Building

The following options have been suggested for consideration and investigation. No feasibility study of any of these suggestions has yet been undertaken.

4.1 Plant a new church in Penlan

Penlan is an area of high social deprivation. Might it be feasible to plant a new church in Penlan? This would be very challenging and would inevitably require a move away from a traditional church model, perhaps learning from the experience of Methodist Pioneering Pathways (see www.methodist.org.uk). Might this also be an opportunity to work in partnership with other Christian churches and/or groups. Churches currently working in Penlan area include Cornerstone Church, Gendros Baptist church, Gospel Hall and the Step-by-step project run from Mynyddbach Church. Could we work in partnership with one or more of these churches or through Swansea Hope?

4.2 Penlan Community Centre

Might it be feasible to develop and extend the current community activities, which are currently mainly secular, perhaps with the provision of a cafe and retaining a worship/prayer area as a Christian presence? Could that become a viable outreach operation for the community?

4.3 Recovery Housing

Recovery Housing is social justice housing that provides low-income and emergency shelter to vulnerable individuals in need of a safe and temporary living environment.

Provision of Recovery Housing has been proposed for the benefit of Ogof Adullam guests and other vulnerable adults (see 3 above). Consideration should be given as to whether there might be advantages in locating such recovery housing at Penlan as an alternative to Brunswick.

4.4 Sell the Building

Consideration should be given to a sale of the building. If there is a potential for significant commercial value, then proceeds from a sale of the building could be used to support further development of the Brunswick building to support that mission.

5. Investigation Work Required

5.1 Needs of Penlan Community

How could we assess the feasibility of planting a new church community, or in Penlan? Discussions could be held with other churches in the area, local councillors, schools and members of the public in places such as Penlan Leisure Centre. Discussions could also be held with the Methodist "Pioneering Pathways" team to investigate whether their experience might be relevant and applicable at Penlan.

5.2 Feasibility of Recovery Housing

The relative advantages and disadvantages of locating Recovery Housing at Penlan v Brunswick should be investigated in conjunction with the Ogof Adullam team. As part of this study the issues around the existing lease of a dwelling attached to Brunswick Church should be clarified.

Discussions should be held with organisations such as Rotherham Lighthouse Homes which is already doing similar work, in order to learn from their experience.

5.3 Building ownership issues

A clear understanding is required of the terms and conditions of the land on which the building is located. This will require a review of appropriate documents and discussions with parties having access to relevant information, e.g. City and County of Swansea.

5.4 Planning Conditions and Limits

An understanding is required of what range of future change of use of the building might be acceptable to the Planning Authority and what might be the potential value from a sale.

5.5 Finances

A review of historical finances is required in order to understand sources of income and costs of operating and maintaining the building.

6. Penlan Planning Team

The Circuit Meeting is requested to approve the setting up of a Penlan Planning Team with the following Terms of Reference:

1. to investigate the feasibility of the options listed in 4.1 to 4.4 of this document, and any other suggestions which may be brought forward.
2. to carry out the investigation work listed in 5.1 to 5.5 of this document, and any additional work required.
3. to make preliminary recommendations to the Circuit Meeting on feasible options for the future of Penlan Church building by September 2016
4. to prepare a draft vision statement for Penlan for approval by the Circuit Meeting.

The proposed team shall comprise:-

Ken Allison (Chairman)

Huw Davies

Martin Gregson

Cynthia Mumford

The team may also co-opt other persons as deemed necessary to complete the above Terms of Reference.

Ken Allison

22nd February 2016

METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN

All churches should have had their Easter Offering envelopes. If not my messengers haven't done their job! With the envelopes and other information is a very important sheet for church treasurers. Once again there have been changes in the way that Methodist HO wants the money dealt with. I have asked all churches to open their own envelopes and deal with the Gift Aid. Cheques can be sent to me or brought to the EO service. It would help, even if you intend bringing the cheque to the service, to e mail me or phone beforehand to let me know how much each church has collected and then I can give a rough total at the EO service.

The service will be at Mumbles at 6 pm on Sunday 24th April. The speaker will be Rev Felicity Randall, superintendent of the Llanelli and Carmarthen circuit. The theme is "Child, get up" and is about the Dalits of India.

A new group has started – Garden 2gether – to maintain the prayer labyrinth at the Amelia Farm. If you are interested in helping please let Janet Neilson know.

Recipes are still needed for the book we are hoping to produce to raise funds for MWiB projects. Women men and children are invited to send in recipes. Please send them to Janet Neilson.

A fellowship day is planned in Pembrokeshire (probably Carew) in the autumn. More details to follow.

Janet Neilson (202085).....address and e mail on current plan.

Circuit Meeting Spring 2016

METHODIST HOMES REPORT

Thank you to all the churches in the circuit that have supported the work of Methodist Homes during 2015. I have received material for METHODIST HOMES SUNDAY which will be on 12th June.

The theme for this year is CREATING COMMUNITIES THAT CARE. I shall distribute the material – Heart and Soul Magazine, posters and envelopes in due course.

Sandra Pengelly

Circuit Report on Circuit Project Zambuko Ra Jehovah OR ZIMBABWE ORPHANS

I praise God always for His guiding hand.

The Swansea and Gower circuit trustees held their first AGM in January and have adopted a revised constitution reflecting the hand over from the Earlsden trustees.

There is a lot of progress taking place in terms of fund raising initiatives and awareness raising.

1. I was invited to talk at All Saints, Mumbles at the Ecumenical Christian Unity Churches Together service. It went very well.
2. I also spoke to Wesley Women's Ecumenical Gathering and they donated £100.
3. Thursday 17th March I will be talking to the Dunvant Christian Fellowship group at the Marriot Hotel at 10am and join their Bible Discussion group.
4. We have been at the Manson House for fund raising events on two occasions.
5. Sketty Uniting Church are organizing a Walk around the Marina on May Bank holiday Monday.
6. This year I will be going to Zimbabwe to pay the school fees, and provide stationary, food, uniforms, shoes etc.

Also I will be checking on the bore hole and probably starting the garden if the borehole works to plan.

PS I have Just received a cheque of £50 from the Jigsaw a team at Reynoldson Methodist Church that run the Mother and Toddlers group.

Circuit Report for Brunswick Methodist City Centre Church

Date 17-3-2016

I would like to thank God for His hand on Brunswick. Quite a lot of activities are taking place here.

1. Lent Bible Studies this year are being held ecumenically.

These are in three groups:

1st. Group meets at St Mary's on Wednesday at 2.30pm I lead this one.

2nd. group meets at St James Thursday 7.30pm

3rd. Group meets at St David's Friday 2.30pm

Unfortunately most of those attending are from Brunswick but for the sake of ecumenism we are at the above churches

2. The prayer meeting is now doing very well since we changed our time of meeting to 4pm from 11.30 am. We have been joined by the Volunteers who come to help at the Drop in at Ogof Adullam. We now have at Maximum 10-11 members praying together.

2. We now seem to have many more Asylum seekers than before as last Friday we had over 100 people attending.

4. Prayers were held for Asylum Seekers on the 8th February at 1.30 pm at no 50 Park Wren Road

5. The 12 steps or Alcohol anonymous (rehabilitation group) seems to be increasing numerically also. They were meeting on Saturday afternoon only but now they meet also on Wednesday. They have connection with the Ogof Adullam.

6. The Hall is still being hired also by outsiders, for example on Tuesday 29th March there will be a Pre Wedding Party from 3-9pm.

All the other usual activities continue to take place at Brunswick.

Reverend Siperire

Ogof Adullam Report for Circuit Meeting 17.02.16

Numbers:

After a slow start back after our summer break our numbers have picked back up again. We are seeing between 22-35 guests at every session. A lot of our guests attend very regularly and we are building up excellent relationships with them. We are also seeing new faces too, who are always glad to find somewhere safe they can come to relax and have a cuppa.

Incidents:

We have no incidents to report. Our volunteers received conflict management and de-escalation techniques training last September and any potential conflict is quickly dealt with effectively before it has a chance to escalate into an incident. However, it is rare that we have any problems as our guests are aware of the rules and respect the fact that we are in a church and are all volunteers giving up our time to help them.

Volunteers:

We held a comprehensive training package for our volunteers in September consisting of handbook training, safeguarding training and conflict management/de-escalation training. Our volunteer numbers have increased with several new volunteers joining the team. A number of those have come from the two Twelve Step Fellowship meetings that meet at Brunswick on a Wed afternoon and Sat evening. We have 3 sets of volunteers, one set for each night we are open, although there are a few volunteers who volunteer on more than one night. However, we are always looking for new volunteers and if anyone would like to join the team it would be great to have you on board.

Night Shelter Report

We opened longer hours on a Saturday during Jan and Feb as part of the Methodist support for Night Shelter. The Circuit provided the volunteers for the extra hours. The number of guests that attended the extra sessions were lower than last year and lower than we expected, which was disappointing. The reasons for this were partly because there were lower numbers accessing Night Shelter and some were selling the Big Issue so were unable to come along. The guests that did come along were very grateful for the extra hours, particularly when the weather was bad. However, we would like to encourage all those who volunteered, that your help was very much appreciated by both Ogof Adullam and our guests. Whilst it was quiet, it was great to meet with you all and fellowship with you. If anyone would like to volunteer on a more regular basis you are more than welcome, just let Huw or Cerys know.

Team Leaders:

We currently have 2 Team Leaders that are supporting us. We need more than this and are looking into how we increase the leadership team in order for Huw and Cerys to have more support and the ability to have nights off.

Management Committee:

The Steering Group – lead by Rev Long that oversees the project continues to meet on a regular basis.

Christianity Explored:

We will be running a 'Street' version of Christianity Explored that has been adapted from the Prison version soon. Huw has met with Steve James (who has written the prison version) on a number of occasions and some Ogof Adullam volunteers have been trained up to be facilitators by Steve. Ken Allison will be helping Huw to run the course. The course will be run at Brunswick on a Sunday afternoon.

Rehab Applications:

We are seeing an increasing number of young men who are wishing to address their addiction issues by attending a residential rehab. Huw has strong links with Vision of Hope in Abergavenny and also with Victory Outreach in Abertillery. Some men have already successfully accessed both rehabs and there are a number who Huw has

referred and are awaiting places. This can be quite time consuming, as well as application forms that need to be completed there is also a lot of liaison with various professionals such as probation workers, drug worker, courts etc. that needs to be sorted out.

Prison Work:

We are building an excellent relationship with Swansea Prison. Both Huw and Cerys facilitate on the Sycamore Tree course and talk about Ogof Adullam and the support that is available when the prisoners are released. As a result of this we have received letters from participants on the course who are due to be released asking for help and support upon their release. Huw is also helping to facilitate the Christianity Explored course there in preparation for the upcoming Ogof Adullam course. Huw has also had contact from Prescoed Open Prison in Usk asking for help to support 2 prisoners who are due for release when they return to Swansea.

Finances:

Martin Gregson has the information regarding the finances for Ogof Adullam.

Since opening in October 2014 our numbers have increased greatly. As a result there is more and more demand on the time of Huw and Cerys. As well as leading the 3 sessions per week they also support guests outside of those hours to attend various appointments such as probation, doctor's, housing, tribunals, court appearances etc. A number of our guests are very vulnerable due to a variety of reasons such as mental health, addiction, learning difficulties, illiteracy, language barriers. As such they are often unable to attend appointments/advocate for themselves successfully and need a lot of support. Whilst we are not able to solve every problem, we do support guests to access the appropriate services/agencies and refer onwards when necessary, in order to make sure that they get the right help and support they so desperately need. The time Huw and Cerys spend doing these things has increased significantly as the number of guests accessing the project has grown.

We have had a number of asylum seekers accessing the project. We supported one individual who was also a member of Brunswick to successfully appeal his asylum decision. He was extremely anxious and Huw supported him to attend a hearing in Newport. This hearing was successful and he has now been granted asylum. He has moved to Bridgend for employment but has been back to visit Ogof Adullam on several occasions and it's lovely to see him so happy and relaxed. We also had a number of Syrian asylum seekers who would regularly visit the drop-in. We saw two of them this week who reported that their wives and children have now moved from Syria to be with them. It was so lovely to know that their families have now been reunited, one man hadn't even seen his son as his wife had been pregnant when he had left to seek asylum. While they no longer need to come to the drop-in as they are busy with family life it's rewarding to know that we offered them a friendly and safe place to come when they needed it most. We have a several asylum seekers who still access the drop-in on a regular basis.

We would like to thank the Circuit for their continued help and support of Ogof Adullam, it is greatly appreciated.

TY CROESO

It's been a slow process getting Ty Croeso known even in the immediate community. People tend to whizz by and not notice us, although some walking past pause to read the notices on the door. Recently though more people seem to be discovering us. Agencies are enquiring about what's on offer, and we've made some potentially useful contacts. Also Ty Croeso is a bit more obvious now, because we have two large pop up banners in the window – our own Ty Croeso one, and an eye-catching one for the Neath Port Talbot Credit Union, who have sessions with us once a week. Our latest new venture is 3 'Healthy Eating Workshops', run by someone who was looking for work but in the meantime has been helping us. The Bereavement Group, Families Anonymous, and Welsh conversation groups all continue.

The Food Bank continues, not with floods of people (thankfully!), but with a regular flow. Agency workers tell us they like coming to fetch food parcels from us because Ty Croeso is so friendly, and we have one or two regular individuals who just drop in for a cuppa and chat. Though they're not eligible for Food Bank vouchers, they can take away a few items of 'past the best before date' food which were not allowed to give out officially ('at their own risk!').

Recently we've been in contact with Gwalia Housing Association who are developing the old War Memorial Hospital in Clydach. Although plans for a rehabilitation and therapy centre for veterans there, have fallen through, Gwalia is converting the main hospital building into four flats, which will be 'halfway housing' for armed forces personnel. These will be managed by a charity that works with veterans. Gwalia thought that these residents and their support workers could be very interested in a link with Ty Croeso. We have also supplied information to Gwalia for the support workers meeting with Gwalia clients elsewhere in our area.

Currently our financial situation is reasonably sound, but we continue to look for grant-funding opportunities, and continue to be very grateful to all organisations and individuals who support us so generously.