

Listen to others Take responsibility for others – don't think it is another's problem to sort Respect
 Be proactive Be there when needed Make time for others Be alert to situations
 Act without judgement There is strength in Community Know who to contact Be approachable
 Know when to pass on information Understand that abuse can happen to anyone
 Care for everyone in the community Have a well-organised Church with safe practices as the norm
 Advertise the Churches' safeguarding values and how they are implemented and by whom
 Keep up to date Make time to listen Have policies in place Assess risk
 Everyone is valued Manage situations safely
 Work as a team Effective Leadership
 Prevention measures Support others
 Work together Show Christian care and love in the way we treat others Be aware of others' needs
 Be aware of power inequalities Be flexible Be Organised Be enthusiastic Positivity
 Create a healthy community where everyone has a voice Seek support Be supportive
 Have protocols in place Ensure that everyone knows them Everyone's experiences are different
 A culture where people know they can come forward Sharing experiences Transparency

Safeguarding

Image by Paivi Payne



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus

Reflections on safeguarding

A collection of poems written by people from across our diocese .

Introduction

The safeguarding leadership training course requires delegates to complete a self-reflection task at the end of the course to consider what they have learnt from the sessions and how it may be integrated in action.

The workbook for the course suggests that reflection takes the form of an action plan but, as we realised an action plan may not work for everyone, we started giving people the option of submitting their self-reflection in a way that works for them.

At the end of one session we suggested that the self reflection 'could even take the form of a poem'. We didn't expect anyone to take that suggestion seriously, but one person did! Inspired by this we continued to give poetry as an option, and since then we have received quite a few reflections in the form of a poem.

The poems we have received are incredibly creative and thought provoking, and make you think about safeguarding in a different way. So, to mark Safeguarding Sunday, we decided to share them with you.

Our thanks to the authors who wrote these amazing words - and to Paivi Payne for our cover image. We hope you find these reflections as valuable and thought-provoking as we do.



Enita Andrews
Safeguarding Trainer



Jacqui Keir-Bucknall
Safeguarding Trainer

Safeguarding training in Bath and Wells

Find out more about the safeguarding training available to support you in your role within the church, and help us ensure that we are safer church for all.

bathandwells.org.uk/safeguarding-training

email: training.safeguarding@bathwells.anglican.org

A message from Ben Goodhind

Safeguarding for me has always been about love and kindness. This despite the many calls of frustration about the bureaucratic side of things has always been my central belief. To safeguard is to show love and kindness for others and oneself. We are all vulnerable at points in our life from a child dependant on its parents to the adult child of elderly parents now relying on us. Life has rocky roads to walk from health concerns to bereavement and events causing sadness and worry and to be the one who provides reassurance and comfort in that moment is a true blessing and gift.

The poems we have collected I feel reflects this central value of safeguarding and how deeply those of us who carry compassion in our hearts care about those we know well and those just entering into our lives.

I did not write the poem below, ChatGpt created it for me, but it captures my feelings about safeguarding in poetic form far better than I could...

A watchful eye, a caring hand,
Safeguarding stands a steadfast band.
With open hearts and listening ears,
We stand against unspoken fears.
A whispered word, a subtle sign,
No voice unheard, no child left behind.
Bound by duty, strong and clear,
Protecting all we hold so dear.
A shield unseen, yet always near,
Built of trust, respect and care
Each soul a beacon, bright and true,
Deserving safety, me and you.
Through empathy, through vigilant grace,
Safeguarding holds a sacred place.



Ben Goodhind
Head of Safeguarding

My self-reflection

Whatever our differences - class, culture, appearance, gender or abilities,

Embrace everyone equally without judgement

Love unconditionally with a humble, serving heart as Jesus would

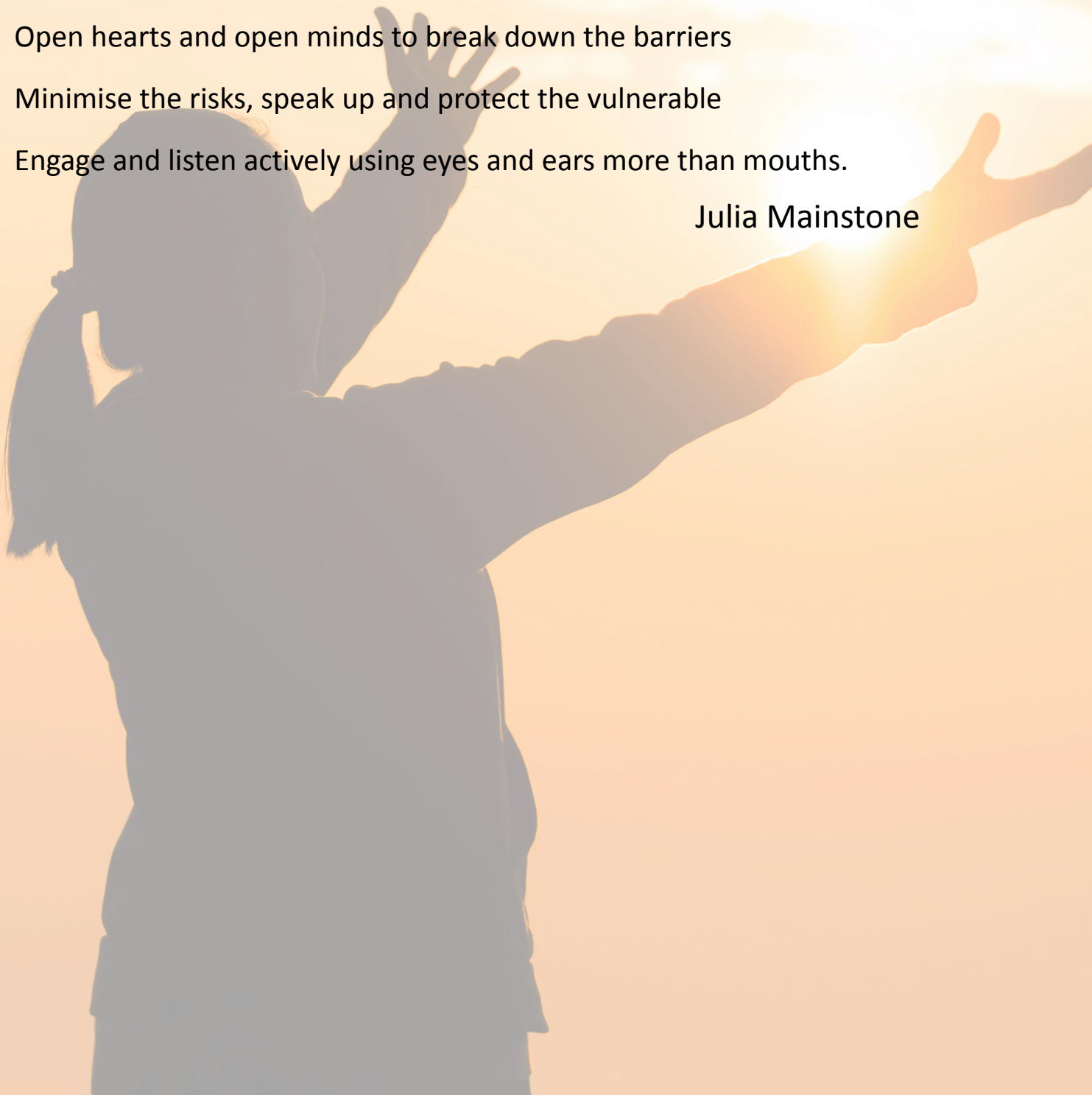
Challenge the unacceptable appropriately using care and compassion as a guide

Open hearts and open minds to break down the barriers

Minimise the risks, speak up and protect the vulnerable

Engage and listen actively using eyes and ears more than mouths.

Julia Mainstone



My self-reflection

I take the tools of this trade,
Reading, discussion, reflection
And put them to work
not just to know more,
but to be more aware,
more responsive,
more present.

I've come to recognize the quiet
signs—
the subtle cues of neglect,
the unspoken weight of abuse.
These things no longer sit
in the shadowy edges of my
attention.
They stand in front of me now,
asking not to be missed.

I'm learning
to listen without assumptions,
to stay curious
in the most human, professional
way.
To build trust
not with grand gestures
but with small, consistent care.
And already,
conversations have begun to open—
early, honest, real.

Safeguarding is not a checkbox
ticked once and done.
It's woven into everything—
in the way I speak,
the way I respond,
the way I hold space for
someone
who just needs to be heard.

This training
has given me more than tools—
it's given me reflection.
A mirror held to how I act,
how I show up.
And how safety, dignity,
and empowerment
are not given once—
they are nurtured,
again and again,
in the daily work of crafting
A safer space.

Sian Collins

Can you hear me?

Can you hear me?
You seem to listen
But are you processing your own
thoughts
Not hearing mine.
Do you believe me?
Do you really understand my
words?
How hard it is to speak them?
The reality they bring?
Do you hear me?

Can you see me?
Not just the figure before you
But the person held within its
framework
Not what presents.
Are you judging me?
Filtering me through preconceived
ideas?
There's more than you see.
It's so hard to reveal me.
Do you really see me?

Can I trust you?
It's really hard to trust.
Are you the one who I can believe
in?
Do you mean what you say?

Is it all a façade a game?
I've been let down before
I'm not sure I can handle it again
All the pain and disappointment.
Do you mean what you say?

Am I safe?
I've not felt safe before
Are you playing a role with me?
A performance of an endowed
task.
Is it true that you won't betray me
That what I say is sacred.
You will be honest with me
And hold me as I journey through
the pain.
Do you keep your word?

What will happen?
Uncertainty and fear have trapped
me
I don't know the consequence.
What I say and share
Maybe the start of a difficult
journey.
It's scary not knowing fearing the
worst.
Outcomes unknown.
How will I cope?

Jan Ladhams

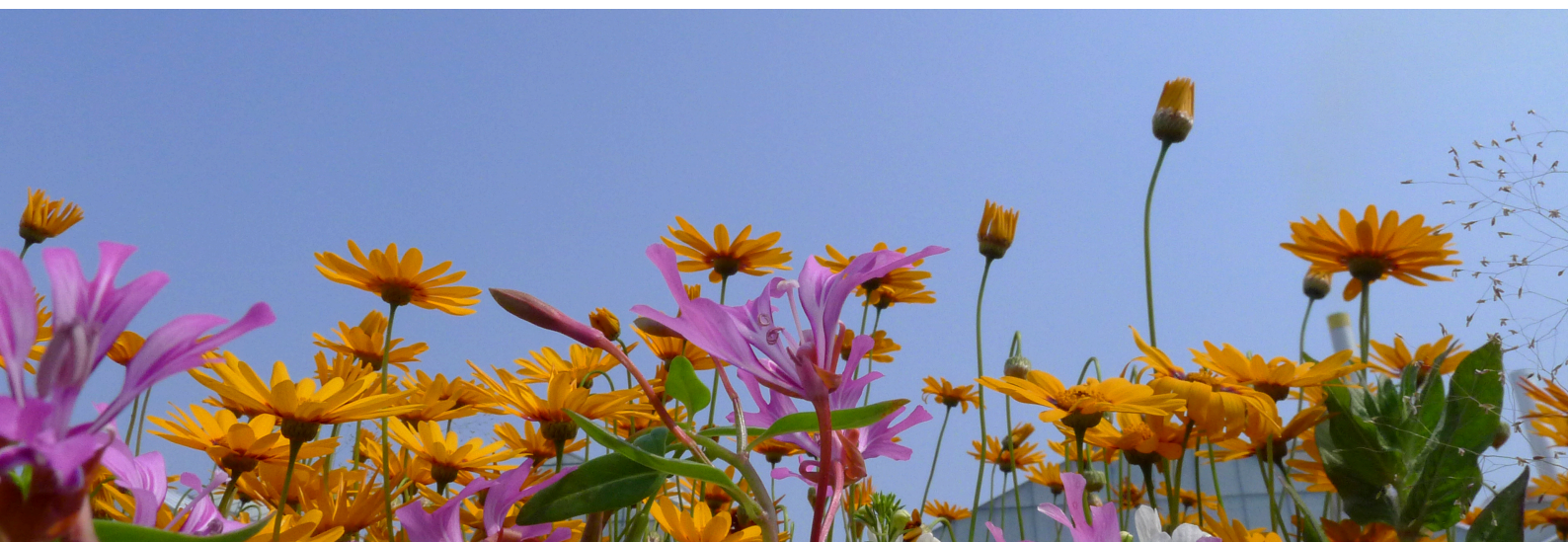
Reflection

So, over the last few weeks, I've spent time reflecting
About the core values sustaining our attitude to protection
For all of the people who are forming our church community. I
Expect that whilst we are not a particularly diverse band
Given that we're advancing in years, with maybe four
Under forties, mostly a not unusual background with maybe a
A couple of visitors from another ethnicity, all are encouraged
to belong at Martock church. None of us are judging,
Doing our best to demand safety for all with great care
Increasing everyone's understanding and knowledge of
Numerous ggrraaaacceeessss and how to ensure that a
God-based attitude belongs in our hearts and in our minds

Safeguarding is at the start of what we do, it is at the end of what we do
and it runs through the centre of what we do.

(Note the first letters of each line, the last letters of each line and the
green letters running through).

David Bull



A poetic safeguarding reflection on Saint Luke chapter 4 verses 16-19

16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read,
17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” (N.R.S.V. Bible)

To Nazareth, where Jesus spent his youth,
Returning guided by the divine truth,
In the synagogue the scroll he unrolled, his mission clear,
Safeguarding principles to establish on earth here.

The Spirit of the Lord, upon Him rests,
Anointed by God, to show us how to safeguard at best.
With commanding presence, He gives His Call,
To protect and care, for both great and small.

“Bring good news to the Poor,” we must,
Go to those at risk, in God we put our trust.
Good News varies, by need and plight,
Listening, Recording, Reporting, Safeguarding is shining a saving light.

The Poor, their power unjustly taken,
Modern Slaves in fear and harm, they live, lives forsaken.
"Release the Captives," a proclamation strong,
To free those bound by chains, in a world gone wrong.

Trafficked, abused, forced to partake,
Mentally tortured groomed and bullied, hearts that ache.
Imprisoned minds and bodies, held in fear,
Behind locked doors, we draw near.

To Safeguard, we must find the key,
Unlocking doors, setting those captives free.
Listening, believing, recording, reporting, hope and courage we give,
Empowering them, so in freedom they can live.
Counselling and care, they may require,
Referrals to P.S.O's made, to lift them higher.
In safeguarding, D.S.O's stand tall,
To protect and care, always answering the call.

"Recovery of sight, to the Blind" perpetrators, we are offering
Knowledge that domestic and spiritual violence, trafficking, and abuse
cause deep suffering.
Ignorance and blindness are orders of the day
Posters, pamphlets, and awareness courses will show that is not the way.

Encouraging learning, changing views,
From negative to positive, breaking through.
Time and understanding, helping all to see,
Safeguarding awareness as the only way to be.

“Set free the Oppressed,” subjugated and crushed,
Helping them find liberty, their poor spirits
hushed.

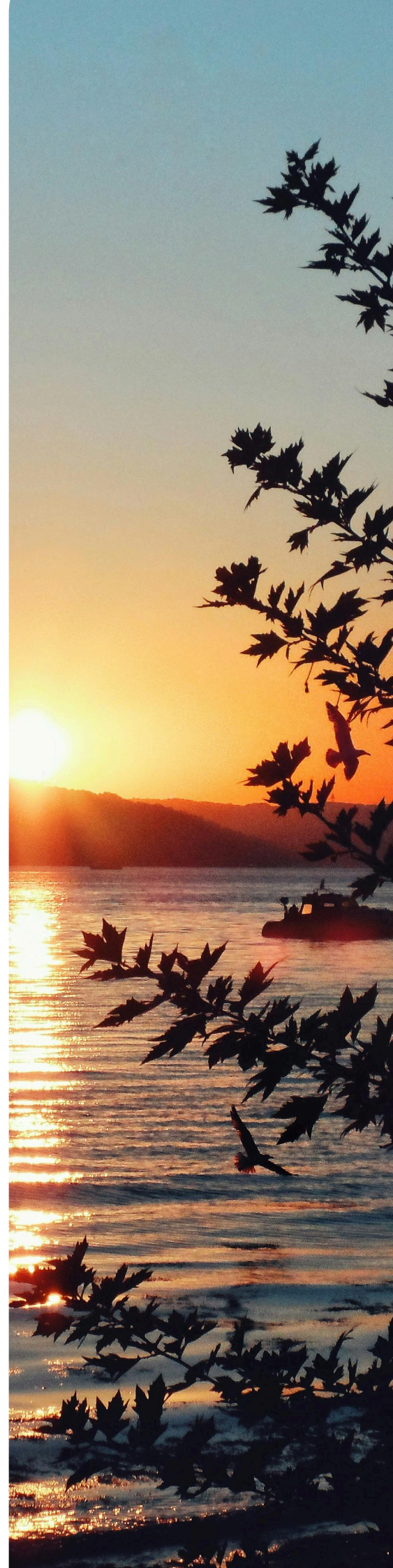
Eradicating these evils, oppression's cruel bind,
Moving to safety, care, and kindness they find.

The Poor brought Good News, the Captives
released,

The Blind given sight, the Oppressed find peace.
“The year of the Lord’s Favour” is proclaimed
When all are freed and none left maimed.

By Safeguarding will the Lord's favour be
felt by all God's children, for they are set eternally
free.

Margaret Hayward



Rooted in Psalm 23 – A Shepherd's Call to Safeguard

The Lord is my Shepherd—I shall not neglect
The call to protect, to guide and reflect.
He leads me beside communities wide,
Eight churches now gathered under one stride.
From this course I've learned that safety is soul-deep—
It's culture, not paper; it's promises we keep.
In Memory Lane and Toddler-Time song,
The vulnerable gather—it's here I belong.
Even with few, I'll lead with intent,
To make safeguarding part of how time is spent.
Surely goodness and safeguarding grace shall follow me
As I walk with compassion and lead faithfully.
And I shall dwell in the care of the Shepherd each day,
Where love both guards the path and guides the way.

Anon
Milborne Benefice



Getting it right from the start

As we start this new and precious adventure,
let us ensure integrity and care are top of the agenda.
Preventing hurt before it occurs by being alert and knowing how to take
action,
giving everyone a place to find safety in desperation.

I promise to not out you, or doubt you as your brokenness is spoken,
but know that I cannot promise to stay silent.
It is our job to make voices heard.
To pay attention and learn lessons from mistakes in the past.
To create safe spaces and policies that last.

We are called to care for the widows and orphans, but we will not stop
there,
we will love all those under our care.
Placing boundaries and barriers, whilst championing confidentiality.
And preaching the realities of the brutalities of our broken world and how
to change them.
And I do not pretend I am not affected.
As your leader, please challenge me to check my power.
I beg you all, tell me anything concerning you hear.
Or email the dedicated inbox, with any worry or problem, or fear.

As we start this new and precious adventure please come and tell me your
story.
At this church safeguarding is a top priority.

Megan Jones-Dellaportas

Safeguarding Leadership Course

Enita and Jacqui were leading the course
we considered the work we prepared.
We looked at the meaning of safeguarding rules
to protect those for whom we should care.

Safeguarding exists for the good of us all
it's important and never forget.
Theses things are in place to ensure that we do
the right things and never regret.

As we looked in depth at all social GGRRAAAACCEEESSSS
my own buried thoughts became clear.
Each of us think that we're fair and we're balanced
but this has made me aware.

Aware of the fact that I need to observe
that I need to look all around.
To question the things that I see and I hear
so our church is a place that is sound.

Listening to others, the stories they tell
and asking them what, where and when.
Making full notes of the things that are said
then reporting concerns onto Ben.

John Rollings

Too shamed to say

Each lovely little rural church, in rolling fields of green,
Are ne'r the place where one might feel that troubles lurk unseen.
With towering stone, each peaceful home, is where we sit and pray,
And trust that God will keep us safe, all hardships far away.

Yet there within each Christian flock, some fear or pain may hide,
As shame or hurt can keep the sorrow bottled up inside.
Not knowing who you dare can trust. If they'd listen to what you say,
'How could they understand what I am going through anyway?'

But that friendly smile of greeting seemed sincere enough to me,
And a number's on the noticeboard to call if I'm in need.
Perhaps I'll phone anonymously, and ask what it's about.
They say it's all in confidence, so no one need find out.

I talked, I cried, withheld some truth, such was my depth of shame,
To be abused by one so near, someone I fear to name.
The voice upon the telephone took notes with real concern,
And asked if I would like to meet, which I refused in turn.

'No, meeting's far too soon for now.' I want to stay unseen.
'Let's talk again another day.' Of this they were quite keen.
My comments held in confidence, I lay the phone to rest,
To struggle with my inner thoughts of how to proceed best.

Another day I call again. They listen while I speak,
And in that calm discussion, I decide it's safe to meet.
So after service, with a smile, I'm greeted as we'd planned
We sit and chat, and I'm assured that help is now at hand.

They cannot keep it to themselves, they're duty-bound to act.
"Don't worry. All's in confidence." I'm reassured of that fact.
"We'll brief our specialist team in Wells, and ask for their advice."
"They'll help us plan a way ahead". I nod, that would be nice.

As days slip slowly into weeks, my confidence starts to grow.
I'll never lose the shame I've felt, knowing all I know.
But with their help the threat's moved on. I'll ne'r see him again!
The friendly smiles at Church I'll trust, from women, and the men.

Paul Shepherd



But How Can We Be Sure?

He seems a nice chap, a friend of a friend
Gets on well with the kids, has spare time to spend
We've had no complaints so we've opened the door
We hope we can trust him but how can we be sure?

She says that she's clumsy, and falls over at home
She doesn't complain much so we leave her alone
Her parents seem caring but her bruises look sore
Maybe all from accidents but how can we be sure?

They all know his temper when he gets cross with the choir
When someone is off-key or should be singing higher
It's all over quite quickly and tears are shed no more
No-one's really hurt by him but how can we be sure?

Peter Ebsworth



Safe Space

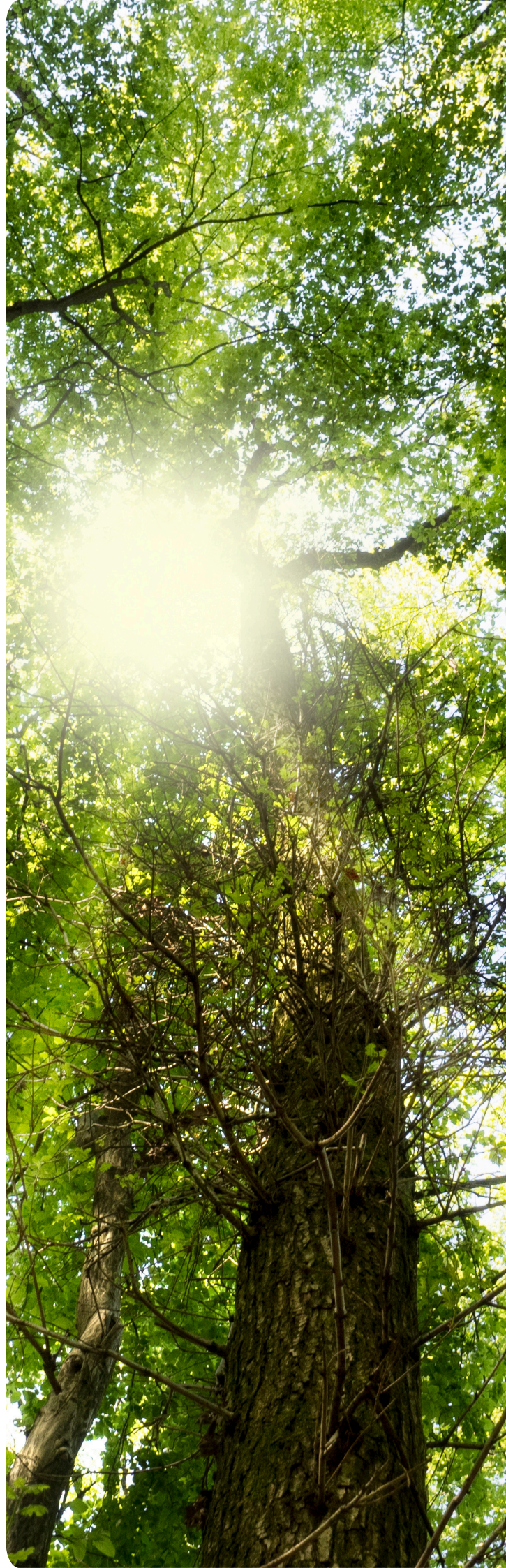
Look with open eyes,
not clouded vision.
Let the light shine,
to expose any darkness.
Don't let the dust settle,
encourage all to look with compassion.

Listen with an open heart,
to words spoken from the heart.
Beware of siren voices within,
and those distracting from the fringe.
Be open to experienced voices,
Listen, listen, listen well.

Watch within your minds leaning,
your upbringing casts a shadow!
Self-awareness is a positive thing,
and our bias something to curb!
In all our encounters with the vulnerable,
keep an open mind and be not
judgemental.

A safe space we all do need,
watch with care, and see through the
mask.
Listen well to words expressed,
and listen for the unexpressed!
A safe space can be found,
when eyes are open and voices heard.

Guy Scott



Safeguarding Acrostic

S	Strong and healthy community
A	Act without judgement
F	Fairness and Equality
E	Everyone is valued
G	Guidance is in place
U	Understand everyone's experiences are different
A	Assess Risk
R	Respect , Record, Report
D	Develop skills
I	Implement prevention measures
N	Never judge
G	Give support and care to all

Paivi Payne

What does safe smell like?

What does it look like,
To be safe and secure?
To know there's love,
Just through that door?
What does it sound like?
What does it smell like?
A silly question, I'm sure.
But how would it smell,
To be safe and secure?
Is it hot cooked dinners,
The pages of an old book?
A listening ear,
That step that you took?
The moment you shared,
I'm not safe, not secure.
Can you help me figure out
How to be sure
Of what safe might smell like?

Leonie Jones, Safeguarding team





www.bathandwells.org.uk/safeguarding

