

Policy and guidance for working with victims and survivors of abuse within the Methodist Church in Britain





Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Definitions	5
a. Victims or survivors	5
b. Abuse	5
3. The impact of abuse	6
a. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD	7
b. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)	7
4. Protected characteristics	7
5. Our commitment to victims and survivors	8
a. Charter for victims and survivors	8
6. Hearing initial disclosures of abuse	9
7. The risk assessment and Safeguarding Panel process	10
a. Involvement of survivors in risk assessments	10
b. Involvement of survivors in the Safeguarding Panel process	11
c. Survivor representative on Safeguarding Panels	11
d. Feedback to survivors after Safeguarding Panels	12
8. Ongoing support	12
a. Pastoral support	12
b. Counselling	13
c. Discrimination and Abuse Response Service (DARS)	14
d. Peer support	14
e. Signposting	14
9. Official apologies and meetings with representatives of the Methodist Church	15
10. Making a civil claim against the Methodist Church	15
11. Survivor engagement work	16
a. Survivor Engagement Forum	16
b. Methodist Survivors Advisory Group	17
c. Methodist Survivors Policy Group	17
12. Useful contacts	18

1. Introduction

Safeguarding is integral to the mission of the Methodist Church to value every human being as part of God's creation. At the heart of the Methodist community is a deep sense of welcome, hospitality and openness, which demonstrates the nature of God's grace and love for all.

Our church communities are called to be places where the transformational love of God is embodied and life in all its fullness is a gift, which is offered to all people. Everyone has the right to protection from abuse and to be treated no less favourably than others, irrespective of any personal or protected characteristic.¹

It is the sad truth that abuse has occurred, and still may occur, within the Methodist Church. All abuse has an element of the misuse of power. For every individual who perpetrates abusive behaviour, there is a victim or victims. Any form of abuse, whether in childhood or adulthood, can have a severe and lifelong impact upon victims and survivors. Abuse which occurs in a church or faith setting can seem even more of a betrayal.

We, as the Body of Christ, should be providing a safe haven for our hurt, abused siblings in Christ. However, too often, victims and survivors of abuse or trauma have not felt welcomed and included within the Methodist Church. They have too frequently not felt believed or part of the church family, and often they have felt their only option was to leave the Church.

We note that some victims and survivors of abuse have expressed offence at the Methodist Church's previous use of the term "Covenant of Care" for Safeguarding Contracts (the agreement made between the Church and an offender or person who poses risk in order to facilitate the individual's involvement in roles, responsibilities, activities in the life of a church or attendance at worship) and felt this was indicative that the Church's emphasis remained on protecting those who cause harm, not caring for victims and survivors. This policy works towards redressing that historic imbalance.

We pledge to offer support to victims and survivors of abuse in a number of ways. The Methodist Church acknowledges that in many instances, a history of abuse – which we recognise often leads to trauma – cannot be recovered from swiftly. The issue of abuse should not be dealt with via a managerial approach by churches, viewing victims and survivors as a 'problem' to be solved. Instead, we commit to walking alongside victims and survivors of abuse, taking a restorative approach over a long-term period, seeking the

¹ From 'Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for the Methodist Church in Britain', (The Methodist Church, March 2023), p.12. Accessible here: methodist.org.uk/SafeguardingPolicy

welfare of the victim above all, and accompanying them on their journey towards full flourishing.²

This policy details the Methodist Church's commitment to respond well to survivors of all forms of abuse, whether perpetrated within the life of the local church or in other contexts.

We outline how we will support people who have experienced abuse, offering financial support towards counselling,³ peer support and involvement in our survivor engagement work.

2. Definitions

2a. Victims or survivors

All labels are subjective and value-laden. Some people who have experienced abuse feel they have overcome much and prefer to be known as a 'survivor'. Some people wish others to acknowledge the harm done to them and so wish to be referred to as a 'victim'. Others may prefer such terms as 'thrivor', 'overcomer' or 'person who has experienced abuse'. In this policy, the term 'victims and survivors of abuse' will be used to mean people who have a lived experience of any form of abuse.

2b. Abuse

We use the term 'abuse' to mean any kind of harm perpetrated against another individual, whether physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, spiritual or through neglect.⁴ Abuse is any action that hurts or injures another person either through deliberate action or acts of neglect. This can be intentional or unintentional: if the behaviour hurts or harms another, then abuse has occurred.⁵ Abuse is about the misuse of power, when one person uses their position (whether actual or perceived) to perpetrate harm towards another.

We do not believe in a 'hierarchy' of abuse; we do not believe that any one form of abuse is more severe or deserving of assistance than any other. In the context of the Christian Church, we particularly wish to acknowledge that

² Graystone, A., 'Chapter 13 – An Entirely Different Approach: The Church of England and Survivors of Abuse' in Fife, J and Gilo (eds), *Letters to a Broken Church*, (Ekklesia, 2019).

³ Counselling and therapy can be funded by the Methodist Church for survivors of abuse perpetrated within the Methodist Church, see section 8b for more details.

⁴ For more details on the different forms of abuse, go to section 6.1.1 of 'Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for the Methodist Church in Britain', (The Methodist Church, March 2023).

Accessible here: methodist.org.uk/SafeguardingPolicy

⁵ Ibid, p.14.

spiritual abuse exists and that we define this as a form of psychological and emotional abuse characterised by an ongoing, systematic pattern of coercive control within a religious context. This could take the form of manipulation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, coercion to conform, control through the use of Scripture or teaching or the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position.⁶

Our commitment to victims and survivors of abuse, laid out in this policy, extends to all who have experienced abuse or trauma, whether this occurred within the setting of the Methodist Church or was perpetrated by those outside this context.

3. The impact of abuse

"The ongoing pain and distress of victims/survivors is deep and lasting. It is amplified when they feel they have not been listened to."⁷

The impact of any form of abuse on another individual can be catastrophic, regardless of the form the abuse took, how long the abuse went on for, or whether it was an isolated incident. Victims and survivors of abuse often report experiencing many severe and enduring long-term issues including:

- mental health problems (including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, self-harming behaviours and experiencing suicidal thoughts)
- self-medicating using drugs or alcohol
- physical health problems
- experiencing intrusive flashbacks, disturbing thoughts, emotions and memories
- sexual difficulties
- emotional difficulties and problems with relationships and parenting
- low self-esteem
- feelings of guilt and shame
- financial or debt management problems
- general difficulty coping with life
- problems with faith and spirituality

⁶ Oakley, L., Kinmond, K., and Humphreys, J. (2018) 'Spiritual Abuse in Christian Faith Settings: Definition, policy and Practice Guidance', *The Journal of Adult Protection*, 20/3-4, pp. 144-54. Accessible at: doi.org/10.1108/JAP-03-2018-0005

⁷ 'Courage, Cost and Hope: the Report on the Past Cases Review', (The Methodist Church, 2015) p. 30. Accessible here: methodist.org.uk/PastCasesReview

3a. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD

Some people who have experienced trauma or abuse go on to be diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or Complex PTSD. Complex PTSD is defined as arising after exposure to an event of an extremely threatening or horrific nature, most commonly prolonged or repetitive events from which escape is difficult or impossible.⁸

People diagnosed with PTSD or Complex PTSD may experience flashbacks or vivid re-experiencing and may suffer with the persistent belief that they are diminished, defeated or worthless, alongside feelings of shame, guilt or failure.⁹

3b. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)

In some severe cases, victims and survivors can develop Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder) to cope with abuse (often childhood abuse). They can experience intense changes in their identity, feeling as though different aspects (or states) of their identity are in control of their behaviour and thoughts at different times.

4. Protected characteristics

People can experience abuse or discrimination due to certain characteristics they possess. The Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal to discriminate against or treat someone unfavourably due to a protected characteristic. The defined protected characteristics are:

- age
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- disability
- marriage and civil partnership
- race
- sex

In section 8c you will learn about our Discrimination and Abuse Response Service and how to access support.

⁸ International Classification of Diseases, 11th revision, Accessible at: icd.who.int

⁹ National Institute for Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, Accessible at: nice.org.uk/guidance/ng116/chapter/recommendations#complex-ptsd

5. Our commitment to victims and survivors

Abuse is still not always recognised in the Church and/or not responded to well. Some victims and survivors of abuse still report not feeling well supported in their church communities. The Methodist Church needs to learn from the negative experiences of victims and survivors.

The following 18-point Charter for Survivors was written by the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group and is an invitation to the Methodist Church to listen, to repent and to change.

5a. Charter for victims and survivors¹⁰

We call on the Methodist Church:

- To enable every survivor to know they matter.
- To teach every member or person in contact with the Methodist Church why the safeguarding agenda matters.
- To see survivors of abuse as successful people, not only or always victims.
- To work for the expression and celebration of the full humanity of survivors whose personhood and flourishing must be about more than just survival.
- To practise and live out that the truth about abuse (establishing of facts) is a cause worth fighting for.
- To enable every member to benefit from the principles underlying the work of the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group and learn from the group.
- To encourage more listening, contemplation and self-reflection for all church people.
- To support the supporters of survivors and stand alongside them.
- To understand that it takes a community to support a survivor – it is a congregational responsibility. There is a shared responsibility of being fully present to the abused.
- To recognise the Church is already fractured and wounded because survivors of abuse are part of the Church.

¹⁰ From 'Reflect and Respond Study Guide' (The Methodist Church, 2020), accessible here: methodist.org.uk/SurvivorResources

- To change attitudes in relation to mental health.
- To recognise that some survivors are unlikeable and some perpetrators are likeable and charming, and learn to avoid stereotypes.
- To learn the difference between secrecy, privacy and confidentiality.
- To understand that a survivor may not know what is meant by family, forgiveness, trust, foundation, safety, truth or confidentiality.
- To be a resource for people supporting historical survivors.
- To detoxify the disclosure of sexual abuse (over and above other disclosures).
- To encourage a healthy theology of the body and avoid spiritualising everything.
- To promote the declaration that the Methodist Church has a zero tolerance response to abuse.

6. Hearing initial disclosures of abuse

Hearing a disclosure of abuse from someone can be a difficult experience, but it is very important to respond well. Many survivors of abuse do not feel able to speak out about what has happened to them for many years and you could be the first person they have ever told. If approached by anyone wishing to talk about a concern, follow the basic guidelines below:

- Consider whether the time and place are appropriate for you to listen with care and security. Do not defer listening, but seek the other person's agreement to find a suitable place to listen.
- Stay calm and listen to the information very carefully, showing you are taking seriously what you are being told. Do not pass judgement, minimise or express shock or disbelief at what you are being told.
- Listen with undivided attention and help the other person to feel relaxed. Do not put words into their mouth.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding. It may be appropriate to ask if they mind you taking notes while they talk or at the end so you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly – but only if it is appropriate.
- When taking notes, use the person's own words and not your own. Do not avoid recording explicit words in order to make the disclosure more

acceptable to others in the church who feel Christians should not use certain words.

- Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality but explain what you will do with the information (see section 7).
- Find out what the person hopes for.
- Reflect back key points of what has been said to confirm you have understood what has been communicated.
- Provide a privacy notice and explain in a clear and simple manner the information contained in it.
- Either during (if appropriate) or after, make notes of what was said, including the date, time, venue and the names of people who were present. Sign the record.
- The District Safeguarding Officer (DSO) should always be advised when a referral is made to Children's Services or the police.
- Provide the person with the means to contact you and be clear about how and when you will give feedback. Be prepared to continue to be there for the person. Be dependable.
- Do not contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.¹¹

7. The risk assessment and Safeguarding Panel process

7a. Involvement of survivors in risk assessments

If a victim or survivor raises a concern about an individual in a ministerial, lay or voluntary role or otherwise actively involved within the Methodist Church, a risk assessment should be carried out. This will probably be done by the relevant District Safeguarding Officer, but in more complex cases, may be carried out by an independent risk assessor appointed by the Connexional Safeguarding Team. In cases where the victim or survivor has been identified, is in contact with the Methodist Church and has expressed

¹¹ 'Safeguarding Policy, Practice and Guidelines for the Methodist Church in Britain', (The Methodist Church, March 2023). Accessible here: methodist.org.uk/SafeguardingPolicy

a wish to be involved in the process, the risk assessor should consult with the victim or survivor and offer them the chance to contribute to the risk assessment report, either by being interviewed or providing a written statement.

The risk assessor will aim to be sensitive and not re-traumatise a victim or survivor during the process. They will discuss with the victim or survivor the best approach for them. If an individual has already been part of another process within the Church and the information they have to share has already been fully and accurately recorded, the person may prefer to refer to this, rather than repeat a disclosure. The victim or survivor will have choice in how they engage with this process.

The victim or survivor will be allocated a pastoral supporter who can accompany them in any meetings with the risk assessor. Victims or survivors should be kept updated by the relevant District Safeguarding Officer or Connexional Safeguarding Team member.

7b. Involvement of survivors in the Safeguarding Panel process

For more serious or complex cases, decisions may need to be made about the future role of the alleged perpetrator by a Safeguarding Panel, based upon the risk assessment report written by the risk assessor. The Safeguarding Panel consists of three members of the Safeguarding Committee with safeguarding experience and/or a senior position within the Methodist Church. The victim or survivor will have the opportunity to produce a victim impact statement or meet with the Safeguarding Panel. Careful planning is needed to ensure that, whether the Panel takes place via Zoom or face-to-face, the victim or survivor does not cross paths with the person who caused them harm.

7c. Survivor representative on Safeguarding Panels

As well as the three members of the Safeguarding Committee, in cases where the subject of a risk assessment has, or is alleged to have, perpetrated abusive behaviour against another person, there should be a survivor representative from the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group as a fourth member of the Safeguarding Panel. Their role will be to advise the other panel members, voicing the victim or survivor's perspective, especially in cases where the Church is no longer in communication with the actual victim/survivor.

7d. Feedback to survivors after Safeguarding Panels

A summary version of the risk assessment report, along with the recommendations made by the Safeguarding Panel, is sent to the victim or survivor, if they wish to receive this.

8. Ongoing support

The Methodist Church can offer support to victims and survivors of abuse in a number of different ways.

The Methodist Church acknowledges that recovery from a history of abuse can take many years and that managerial responses that view victims and survivors of abuse as a “problem to be solved” need to be avoided.

“Allegations of abuse are seen as legacy problems in the smooth running of the institution. Abuse is constructed as an event requiring an economic and managerial situation, rather than a ruptured relationship requiring restoration”.¹²

We will walk alongside victims and survivors of abuse, taking a restorative approach with the understanding that this may well require a long-term commitment. We will seek to promote the well-being of victims and survivors by accompanying them on their journey towards full flourishing.¹³

8a. Pastoral support

Whether a victim or survivor has just disclosed an abusive situation that they were recently in or whether they have been living for many years as a victim or survivor of abuse, the Methodist Church will offer appropriate pastoral support.

Some victims or survivors may wish to have someone to speak to who is aware of their history – whether they wish to speak about it or not. Some people may want practical help or emotional support with how they are coping. Some people may find that their abuse and trauma has affected their faith and relationship with God and may wish to speak to someone about the spiritual dimension of being a victim or survivor of abuse.

A pastoral supporter should be identified with the help of the relevant District Safeguarding Officer, in discussion with the victim or survivor about their

¹² Graystone, A., ‘Chapter 13 – An Entirely Different Approach: The Church of England and Survivors of Abuse’ in Fife, J and Gilo (eds), *Letters to a Broken Church*, (Ekklesia, 2019).

¹³ Ibid

needs. If the victim or survivor in question does not wish to speak to anyone in their home district, pastoral support could be arranged with the help of a neighbouring DSO.

8b. Counselling

Many survivors of abuse benefit from counselling or other therapy.

The Methodist Church will pay for therapy for survivors of abuse perpetrated within the Methodist Church. This means the perpetrator who caused harm has to have been a minister, leader, employee, member of, or otherwise involved with the Methodist Church.

This counselling or therapy is usually provided through CiC, founded in 1988 by the Westminster Pastoral Foundation.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that adults with a diagnosis of PTSD or clinically important symptoms of PTSD are offered individual Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), or – in some circumstances – Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR). NICE recommends that both CBT and EMDR should typically be provided in 8-12 sessions, but more if clinically indicated.¹⁴

The Methodist Church will fund up to 15 sessions of face-to-face counselling to survivors of abuse within the Methodist Church.

Initially, CiC will carry out a clinical and practical needs assessment, in order to match the individual to an appropriate counsellor within their geographic area. The sessions may be carried out over the phone, face-to-face, or a mixture of both depending on practical and clinical issues, as well as the client's preference.

If a survivor of abuse within the Methodist Church is already receiving counselling or therapy from another provider, the Methodist Church can fund up to 15 sessions of support by paying the provider.

Please note, CiC will not accept clients who are already receiving counselling within another setting, or who are assessed as needing medical treatment, including specialist mental health or psychological treatment via their GP/the NHS. In such instances, the client will be fully assisted through signposting to alternative support.

All requests for counselling must be authorised by the Director of Safeguarding.

¹⁴ Ibid

8c. Discrimination and Abuse Response Service (DARS)

The Methodist Church's Discrimination and Abuse Response Service was created as part of the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity to encourage and enable the reporting of incidents of discrimination or abuse, including those which have an element of exclusion, bullying or harassment.

This service is designed to help people who are experiencing discrimination or harm, and feel they need support in dealing with it. This would include cases where someone feels they are being unfairly or differently treated because of telling someone in church that they are a survivor of abuse.

The service has a victim-focused approach, ensuring individual's needs and concerns are identified and responded to.

DARS is initially being piloted in certain districts but is accepting enquiries from further afield.

Contact DARS on: **020 7467 5131** or email dars@methodistchurch.org.uk

8d. Peer support

The Connexional Safeguarding Team has links to a small group of victims and survivors of abuse with experience of supporting other survivors through their voluntary work or careers. These individuals are members of the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group.¹⁵ It may help a victim or survivor of abuse to speak to someone who has been through a similar experience and who can understand and share what they are going through on a peer basis. The Connexional Safeguarding Team can put victims or survivors in touch with one of these peer supporters. Contact should be made via a Safeguarding Casework Supervisor.¹⁶

8e. Signposting

There will be some instances when a victim or survivor may need more specialist or professional help. The District Safeguarding Officer or the Connexional Safeguarding Team can signpost to specialist charities or statutory services that may be able to help.

¹⁵ See section 11b.

¹⁶ See section 12 for contact details.

9. Official apologies and meetings with representatives of the Methodist Church

All forms of abuse are wrong and when a Church body such as the Methodist Church is responsible, the betrayal of the victim or survivor's trust is even greater.

It may be a helpful step in the healing journey of some victims and survivors to meet with senior Methodist clergy and safeguarding representatives. The purpose of such a meeting is to talk through what happened and where the Church went wrong, for the victim or survivor to hear that the Church is genuinely remorseful for what took place and for a discussion to take place about how the Church can offer atonement for the hurt that has been caused.

Similarly, an official apology issued by the Methodist Church may be beneficial to the victim or survivor.

10. Making a civil claim against the Methodist Church

If a Methodist minister, lay employee or volunteer has caused harm through abuse, there is the option to make a civil claim against the Methodist Church for financial compensation. A claim needs to be made formally through a solicitor. The claim letter should be sent to:

**The Legal and Constitutional Practice Team,
Methodist Church in Britain,
Methodist Church House,
25 Tavistock Place,
London WC1H 9SF
lcp@methodistchurch.org.uk**

Although the Methodist Church cannot offer legal advice or help to make the civil claim, we can still support the victim or survivor throughout the process. Making a civil claim against the Methodist Church does not affect the individual's right to apply for free counselling¹⁷ or pastoral support¹⁸ from the Methodist Church.

Paying for counselling or treatment for a victim or survivor of abuse is not an admission of legal liability.¹⁹ The **Compensation Act 2006** furthermore makes

¹⁷ See section 8b above.

¹⁸ See section 8a above.

¹⁹ 2015 Rehabilitation Code, Case Management Society UK and others, available here: [cmsuk.org/case-management/rehabilitation-code-terms](https://www.cmsuk.org/case-management/rehabilitation-code-terms)

it clear that, “offering an apology, an offer of treatment and other redress shall not in itself amount to an admission of negligence or a breach of statutory duty.”²⁰

For further information, Methodist Insurance have produced a helpful guide both to help victims and survivors (and policy holders) to understand the process.²¹

11. Survivor engagement work

Some victims and survivors of abuse very kindly give their time to help the Methodist Church learn more about their perspective by getting involved in survivor engagement work. There are three different groups, as well as more ad hoc volunteering opportunities.

11a. Survivor Engagement Forum

The point of entry for any victim or survivor of abuse wishing to become involved in the Methodist Church’s survivor engagement work is the Survivor Engagement Forum.

This is a regular introductory service for survivors that offers them an opportunity to meet (via Zoom) with others and access support from peers who understand their situation, hear about what the Methodist Church currently provides by way of support, and provides an opportunity for the Church to better understand victims’ and survivors’ perspectives and see what can be learned from these.

The meetings are facilitated on Zoom by members of the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group, Methodist Survivor Policy Group and Connexional Safeguarding Team who provide welcome and offer an introduction to our work with survivors. From these meetings, victims and survivors could be signposted to other services, be put in touch with their District Safeguarding Officer or make links with others to consider how local services could be provided.

Recognising that attendees may be in very different places according to their survivor journey, the Survivor Engagement Forum meetings aim to reflect the principle of ‘safe space’ so that attendees feel physically and emotionally safe to come and share their experiences.

²⁰ Part 1 (section 2) of the Compensation Act 2006, available here: legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/29/section/2

²¹ For more information see ‘Our guiding principles for the handling of civil claims involving allegations of sexual and physical abuse’, Methodist Insurance, available here: methodistinsurance.co.uk/documents/guiding-principles.pdf

11b. Methodist Survivors Advisory Group (MSAG)

The Methodist Survivors Advisory Group has been meeting since July 2016. The group has several aims:

- to enable the Methodist Church to understand better the perspective of victims and survivors of abuse
- to teach the Church to better meet the needs of victims and survivors
- to work towards the goal of making our churches a safer space so that fewer victims and survivors are created.

MSAG meets at least four times a year, twice via 24-hour residential meetings. Membership consists of victims and survivors of abuse who bravely and compassionately give their time, accepting the mission of helping the Methodist Church in this area of work, keeping the viewpoint of victims and survivors central to all safeguarding work. The Secretary of Conference and Director of Safeguarding both attend all residential meetings, a mark of the Methodist Church's commitment to improving its response to victims and survivors. The group has a strong campaigning element with immensely dedicated members who see this work as part of their vocation.

MSAG wrote the 'Reflect and Respond' study guide and the 'Supporting Survivors of Abuse' leaflet.²² They planned and produced a pair of well-attended webinars on the theme 'Speaking Truth: Voices of Survivors of Child Abuse' (**webinar 1: 'Hearing Reality: Voices Crying in The Wilderness' and webinar 2: 'The Church's Response to Survivors: From Stumbling Block to Stepping Stone'**²³).

New members are admitted every two years in September.

11c. Methodist Survivors Policy Group (MSPG)

The Methodist Survivors Policy Group works in a co-productive way with survivors of abuse to design Methodist Church policies, training and other strategic documents. It is primarily a place for active scrutiny and engagement with new policies at each stage of their development, along with procedures and training plans – especially those produced by the Connexional Safeguarding Team.

²² Both available at methodist.org.uk/SurvivorResources

²³ Both available at methodist.org.uk/safeguarding/webinars/2022-speaking-truth-voices-of-survivors-of-child-abuse-webinar-series/

There is also the chance for victims and survivors to suggest new work streams for the Safeguarding Team to focus on, and the opportunity for survivors to be involved from the inception of a project.

The group is grounded in the principles of co-production:²⁴

- **Equality** – everyone having assets and no one group/person being seen as more important than others
- **Diversity** – aiming to involve seldom-heard groups such as survivors
- **Accessibility** – ensuring group participants have an equal opportunity to participate fully in the way that suits them best
- **Reciprocity** – both sides getting something back, more equal relationships and better understanding gained from survivor voices

The group meet every three to four months via Zoom, with email correspondence in between as required. New members are admitted every two years in September.

12. Useful Contacts

Contact your District Safeguarding Officer

methodist.org.uk/Safeguarding/DSO

Discrimination and Abuse Response Service

Tel: 020 7467 5131

Email: dars@methodistchurch.org.uk

Kate Little

Safeguarding Casework Supervisor and lead for Church's response to victims and survivors of abuse

Tel: 020 7467 5289

Email: littlek@methodistchurch.org.uk

General safeguarding enquiries

Tel: 020 7467 5189

safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk

²⁴ Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) website, available here:

scie.org.uk/co-production/what-how#principles



Published November 2023.

Any updates to this policy will be made on the Methodist Church in Britain website:

methodist.org.uk/safeguarding

Please check this regularly.

If you would like to request this resource in an alternative format, please contact us to discuss your needs at:

publishing@methodistchurch.org.uk

