



PASTORAL CARE POLICY

1. TERMS

Church- refers to Buckshaw Village Church (BVC)

Church Member- someone who regularly attends Church and considers BVC to be their Church family

Leadership Team- the clergy, staff and wardens

Member List- a list of Church Members along with their contact points within the Church

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator- volunteer from Church who assists the Leadership Team with the organisation of the pastoral care work within the Church and manages the Pastoral Care email address. They are appointed by the Leadership Team to this role.

Pastoral Care Directory- a collection of information and contact details that can be used by the pastoral care team for referring on

Pastoral Care Email- pastoral@buckshawvillagechurch.org.uk

Pastoral Care Team- team of volunteers from Church who offer formal pastoral care to Church members

Prayer Team- volunteers from Church who meet to pray together for the Church

Role Description- list of the expectations and requirements to be a member of the pastoral care team at Buckshaw Village Church

Team Member- member of the Pastoral Care Team

2. WHAT DOES CHRISTIAN PASTORAL CARE MEAN AT BUCKSHAW VILLAGE CHURCH?

At BVC our vision is to Love Jesus. Love People. Love Life. Pastoral Care plays an important part in living out that mission and enabling one another to live life to the full (John 10:10b "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.")

Firstly, we love Jesus and want to share Him with those around us. This is the primary aim of Pastoral Care within the Church.

Secondly, we love others because we were first loved by Jesus (John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."). Pastoral Care is about showing others the love of Jesus.

Thirdly, we love life by taking care of our own holistic well-being and supporting others as they do the same. Pastoral Care is about supporting each other in all areas of well-being, predominantly through listening and prayer.

At BVC we believe that Pastoral Care is the responsibility of all members and not reserved for those on the Pastoral Care Team. As a Church family we strive to pastorally care for one another by practicing the Fruit of the Spirit- love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self- control (Galatians 5:22-23) together with compassion, humility, tolerance, forgiveness and thankfulness to God (Colossians 3:12-17).

3. FORMAL/OFFICIAL PASTORAL CARE AND INFORMAL/UNOFFICIAL PASTORAL CARE

Most of the Pastoral Care that occurs within BVC will be happening in an informal and unofficial way as the Church family care for one another and encourage each other in their faith. This type of Pastoral Care is actively encouraged as it is fundamental to our life as a Church.

There will be times when formal and official Pastoral Care is needed and appropriate. This will be carried out by members of the Pastoral Care Team and organised by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator.

However, at BVC we acknowledged it can be difficult to draw a boundary line between these two types of Pastoral Care. The amount of formal Pastoral Care given will be decided by the Leadership Team and consideration will be given to the amount of informal Pastoral Care already being given by the Church family. In many cases the formal element will be used to plug any gaps rather than being the primary form of Pastoral Care.

Those holding official position within the Church (such as Clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers, Authorised Lay Ministers and Wardens) when acting as a representative of Church, have a responsibility to adhere to the Church vision, values and policies. Group leaders (such as Growth Group leaders) also have a responsibility to adhere to the Church vision, values and policies when representing the Church. Those authorised to administer Home Communion are acting on behalf of the Church whenever they are engaged in that work.

4. WHAT DOES PASTORAL CARE LOOK LIKE AT BVC?

As well as being a Church family who cares for one another and offers informal Pastoral Care as standard it is also important that any Church member who becomes aware of another member in need of Pastoral Care contacts the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator using the email address at the start of this policy. Likewise, if someone feels they themselves need Pastoral Care they can contact the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator using the same email address. If any member does not have access to email they can speak in person to a member of the Leadership Team or the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator.

4.1 Visits and Other Contact

Formal visits- These will be either to a person's home, to hospital or a meeting in a public place

Formal telephone calls/emails/messages/video calls

Informal visits/calls/emails/messages/video calls

4.2 Prayer

At BVC we consider prayer to be a fundamental aspect of our lives as disciples of Jesus therefore it is actively encouraged that all Church members be praying for each other on a regular basis. It is expected that all members of the Pastoral Care Team will be praying for those they are caring for on a regular basis, but that they will not share names or specific information with anyone outside of the Pastoral Care Team/ Leadership Team when praying with others. BVC has a Prayer Group who meet regularly; this group will be informed in a confidential manner by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator of any Pastoral needs to be included in prayers (where the person / people concerned have given consent).

Our primary reason for offering Pastoral Care is to bring Jesus to people and share His love with them. Therefore, it is expected that anyone receiving formal Pastoral Care will know that this is being provided by Church and as a result there will be a large emphasis on Jesus. It will often be appropriate for members of the Pastoral Care Team to offer prayer to those they care for. It is important that these offers are made gently so that the person feels they can say no if they do

not wish to pray with the team member at that time. Pastoral Care Team members can offer to pray for the person at another time rather than with them in person.

4.3 Home Communions

These are to be provided for those people who have specifically requested to have communion rather than those people who simply want someone to visit them. These are also for those who are unable for reasons of age or ill health to attend a Church service in person. These are to be administered only by those who have been authorised to do so and agreed by the Leadership Team.

4.4 Practical Support

Transport- due to insurance and legal reasons it is preferred that informal lifts are offered to friends within the Church as the Pastoral Care Team cannot formally arrange transport.

Meals- there are times when it is appropriate for meals to be provided to a Church member for a fixed amount of time (such as in the first few weeks after a new baby is born or during times of difficulty or ill health). It is preferred that this be arranged between friends at Church and will not be formally organised by the Pastoral Care Team.

Shopping- if someone is unable to go shopping or arrange for groceries to be delivered due to ill health or needing to quarantine it is preferred that this be arranged between friends within the Church as the Pastoral Care Team cannot deal with another person's finances for safeguarding reasons. If this is a long-term issue then the Pastoral Care Team will contact an appropriate service provider (see Pastoral Care Directory) to seek appropriate continued support for the person.

Other practical needs- at all times it is important that both Church members and members of the Pastoral Care Team safeguard themselves as well as the person receiving Pastoral Care. Therefore, it is vital that members of the Pastoral Team adhere to safeguarding guidance at all times and do not offer any support that falls outside of their role description (see additional document). Other Church members are to make their own decisions about what support they offer to others ensuring they always consider their own safety before undertaking any activity. If they need advice they can speak to a member of the Pastoral Care Team.

4.5 Growth Groups and Other Official Church Groups

All Church members are encouraged to join a Growth Group or participate in other groups, teams and activities at Church. Being part of a smaller group at Church can be very helpful and a great way to engage in fellowship with other members.

Leaders of groups have particular responsibility to provide Pastoral Care for those in their groups. Should a situation arise where they feel more support is needed the leader can contact the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator.

It is understood that at different times in people's lives attending a small group may not always be possible. At such times it is important that the Church family still show the same love and care whilst being careful not to exert any pressure on the person.

4.6 Baptism and Wedding Preparation

The Leadership Team will arrange for visits to Baptism and Wedding families prior to the occasion by the Clergy and there may also be additional visits by other members of the Leadership Team where appropriate.

5 ORGANISATION WITHIN CHURCH

5.1 Pastoral Care Team and Co-Ordinator

The Pastoral Team will consist of Church members who have been approached by the Leadership Team to serve in this ministry as well as a Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will oversee the Pastoral Care activities within the Church, manage the email address where requests for Pastoral Care will be sent and use the members list to check that all Church members have a point of contact within the Church if they would like one.

The Pastoral Care Team will meet regularly to pray and discuss any issues regarding Pastoral Care within BVC and the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will ensure relevant information is passed on to the Leadership Team. These meetings will also serve as support for the Pastoral Care Team as members of the team will be encouraged to share their load with the team in a confidential manner to enable them to be best supported in their role.

5.2 Prayer Team

An important aspect of Pastoral Care at BVC is prayer. As a Church we acknowledge that we cannot do anything in our own strength and so need prayer to be effective in our Pastoral Care. The Prayer Team is closely linked with the Pastoral Care Team and will be regularly praying for the Pastoral Care work within the Church.

6. KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE

It is vital that at all times the safety of both the person providing the Pastoral Care and the person receiving it is prioritised. This is done in the following ways:

6.1 Safeguarding

All members of the Pastoral Care Team will have an appropriate DBS and completed the Church of England Safeguarding training, 'Basic Awareness and Foundation' course. Team members will adhere to the Blackburn Diocese 'A Policy for Safeguarding in the Diocese of Blackburn' along with the Diocese's 'E-safety and Acceptable Use Policy' at all times. If they have any Safeguarding concerns these will be raised with the Church's Safeguarding Officers using the email in the Pastoral Care Directory.

Members of the Pastoral Care Team should take appropriate measures to ensure they are safeguarding themselves as well as the people they are caring for. It is important that a Team member informs someone else in the Team of where and when they are meeting the person they are caring for.

6.2 Boundaries and Self-Care

It is important that all people offering Pastoral Care/Support consider their own limitations and boundaries in order to ensure they are acting within their own capabilities and staying safe. If anyone feels the person receiving care/support requires more than they are able to give they should seek permission from that person to refer them on to a suitable service provider (details can be found in the Pastoral Care Directory). If a referral is needed then the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator should be informed to ensure continuity of care and prevent duplication. For those on the Pastoral Care Team they should refer to their role description as guidelines for the boundaries they will need to adhere to.

Members of the Pastoral Care Team should seek support from the other members of the Pastoral Care Team and contact the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator if they feel they need to take a break from their duties. It is important that the health and well-being of the Team members are protected at all times.

The length of Pastoral Care relationships will be monitored by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and the Team will review together on a regular basis. Formal Pastoral Care should be used for specific needs and long-term support should be sought elsewhere within the Church (such as involvement in a Growth Group or serving on a team). Initially a Pastoral Care relationship will consist of 3 meetings and then this will be reviewed by those involved to decide if more meetings would be beneficial or if alternative support would be more beneficial.

6.3 Confidentiality

All information related to Pastoral Care within BVC will be kept confidential within the Pastoral Care Team and Leadership Team. Members of the Pastoral Care Team should inform those they care for that what is said will, where possible, remain confidential within the team. Members of the Team must not promise absolute confidentiality as there are instances where it cannot be kept.

Exceptions to confidentiality include:

- 1) When it is believed that someone may be at risk of harming themselves or others
- 2) When it is believed that there may be an issue regarding child protection / safeguarding
- 3) When a Court of Law has requested the information be disclosed

In the first two cases, as long as the member of the Pastoral Team is not putting themselves at risk, they should encourage the person to disclose the information themselves to the appropriate bodies, authorities or agencies. If this is not possible the Team member should seek the person's consent to share the information. If the person is not forthcoming, then the Team member should share the information on a need-to-know basis only to the appropriate bodies, authorities or agencies. All disclosures should be reported to the Church Safeguarding Officers regardless of who shares the information.

In order to protect themselves, members of the Pastoral Care Team should be careful with the information they share when caring for a person. They are predominantly there to listen, rather than discuss their own lives and problems.

6.4 Touch, Sexuality and Intimacy

Members of the Pastoral Care Team must not be sexually intimate with any person to whom they are providing Pastoral Care. Each Team member is responsible for safeguarding sexual or emotional boundaries within the Pastoral Care relationship. Particular care needs to be taken when working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Physical touch should be used appropriately and not initiated by the Team member. In particular when working with children, young people or vulnerable adults it is best if any physical touch occurs in a public space to avoid misunderstanding and safeguard both parties.

Where possible two members should go together for home visits unless someone else is in the house. These meetings are best taking place in public environments. However as a church we acknowledge that this is not always possible and so team members are expected to make a reasonable judgement regarding if it is safe and sensible to visit a person at home on their own, they may consider other alternative such as a virtual meeting. In an instance where a team member is visiting someone alone they must inform someone else in the Team where they are and when they leave as per the Church's Lone Working Policy. Informing someone else also allows the other person to pray for the meeting whilst it is taking place.

When the Church member is under 18 years of age they should not be met with alone. If a meeting is to happen parental consent will have to be gained and the meeting must take place in a public environment.

7 DATA PROTECTION

7.1 Scope

This section sets out the implementation of the Church Data Protection Policy in the context of the Pastoral Care Team.

7.2 Record Keeping

Members' List

To ensure all members of the Church are being included and cared for, a Members' List will be kept by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator with a note of the points of contact each person has with Church (such as: member of a Growth Group, serving on a particular team, etc.). This is to ensure that all Church members have at least one touch point and that no one is forgotten; it is not a way of checking up on a member's involvement as each person's degree of involvement is personal choice. It will also be used by the Pastoral Care Team and Leadership Team for prayer purposes, but all details will be kept confidential within those teams.

A person's details will be added to the Members' List upon any of the following events occurring:-

- Joining the Electoral Roll of BVC
- Returning a BVC Contact Information Card
- Joining a serving rota at BVC where a notice is provided that personal details will be stored in accordance with this Procedure
- Undertaking voluntary work with BVC which requires a DBS check to be carried out, or where contact details are needed to comply with safeguarding requirements

There are other situations where a person might indicate that they wish to be part of the BVC community, in which case they will be asked if they have already completed a Contact Information Card and, if they haven't, they will be asked to fill one in. Examples include:-

- Joining a Growth Group at BVC
- Joining a serving rota at BVC where a notice is not provided about storage of personal details
- Undertaking other voluntary work with BVC which does not require a DBS check to be carried out, and where contact details are not needed to comply with safeguarding requirements

Should anyone wish to be removed from the Members' List they can ask the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator using the Pastoral Care Email.

Records of Formal Pastoral Care

Details of the Pastoral Care Team and people receiving Formal Pastoral Care will be kept by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator along with a record of all Formal Pastoral Care Visits. Pastoral Care Team members will be required to inform the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator (preferably by email) of dates, times and places of any Formal Pastoral Care Visits, and they may also wish to include any other details of significance that could be useful for the Co-ordinator to take note of (for example: if the person is now housebound and will not be able to attend Church meetings in person). All of this information will be stored securely and with consent as noted in the following section 'Data Protection'.

7.3 Data Protection

Members' List

It is universally acknowledged that providing pastoral care is an essential and integral part of Christian ministry and discipleship. Pastoral care can also be an effective means of discovering the existence of (or preventing the occurrence of) safeguarding concerns. It is accordingly a necessary function of BVC's legitimate interests to provide pastoral care to Church members.

The Members' List will be stored securely on the BVC Dropbox in a restricted folder that can be accessed by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and the Leadership Team. The list will include each person's first and surname and details of the points of contact they have within Church. This data is being stored to help the Pastoral Care Team and Leadership Team ensure that all members of the Church are being cared for as part of the Church family and so that the Leadership Team can assess the extent of resources needed to operate the Church and its activities effectively. It will not be used for any other purposes.

If a person leaves BVC, then their information will be removed from the Members' List. The Members' List will be reviewed a minimum of four times a year. A person can also request for their information to be removed at any time by contacting the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. See "Data Retention" below.

Formal Pastoral Care

Details of the Pastoral Care Team and the people being cared for will also be stored securely on the BVC Dropbox in a restricted folder that can be accessed by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Leadership Team, Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer. This list will include names, addresses, emails and phone numbers as well as any significant information that can help the Pastoral Care Team care best for the person and details of all visits and contact between members of the Pastoral Care Team and the people they are caring for to ensure all people are being treated as equally as possible. This data is being stored to enable Formal Pastoral Care to be provided.

Pastoral Care Team members may wish to store contact information on their personal devices for the specific people they are caring for. This will enable them to arrange visits and keep in touch. Any such personal data must be stored securely, and any loss or unauthorised disclosure of personal data must be reported immediately to the Data Protection Officer. When the team member ends their Formal Pastoral relationship with the person they must delete any contact details they have stored unless they have a legitimate reason for keeping it for personal use (for example, if they are part of a different group within Church with that person or they are friends outside of the Formal Pastoral relationship).

A person who is offered Formal Pastoral Care will be informed about the processing of their personal data in accordance with the above, during the first visit or contact. If they do not wish for their details to be kept in this way, then it will be explained that it will not be possible to provide Formal Pastoral Care. They will also be asked if they wish for their support needs to be shared confidentially with the Prayer Group (see section 4.2) – if they do not wish to consent to this then this does not prevent Formal Pastoral Care from being provided. When considering the person's support needs, if this involves private information about third parties then consideration must be given as to whether that information can or should be shared with the Prayer Group either anonymously or with the third party's / parties' consent.

Personal information stored by the Church to enable Pastoral Care visits and activities to take place will be archived, and ultimately deleted, once no longer needed.

7.4 Data Retention

In any case where there is no longer a current pastoral basis for personal data to be kept “live” (e.g. a person has requested removal of their data, or is no longer receiving Formal Pastoral Care) then relevant personal data will be kept archived until there is no longer any use for it, after which point it will be securely destroyed. The presumption of a reasonable length of time to retain personal information is 7 years since the last contact with an adult, and in the case of a child it is 4 years after their 18th birthday. This aligns with the limitation periods under the Limitation Act 1980 for most legal claims in respect of an adult (6 years) or a personal injury claim by a child (3 years after turning 18), plus an additional year to allow for the delayed commencement or service of proceedings.

7.5 Safeguarding

The storage of personal data in accordance with this procedure is subject at all times to any disclosures or other processing which is necessary where required by law and/or to protect the vital interests of any person, in particular where disclosures or other processing is necessary to comply with safeguarding policies and obligations or associated criminal, civil or disciplinary proceedings etc.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding this policy please contact Buckshaw Village Church, 1 Bridgewater Drive, PR77EU or email admin@buckshawvillagechurch.org.uk

This policy was adopted by the PCC November 2021