

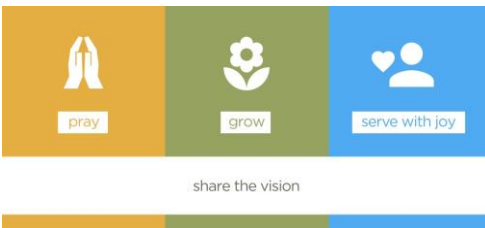
“Responding Well to those who have been abused”  
(Church of England 2011)

“Survivors of sexual abuse still see a need for better support and action in recognition of their pain. They continue to press the Church to provide safer communities where their experiences of abuse can be heard and support offered.”

We are thus required to appoint “carefully chosen, competent and trained people as ‘authorised listeners’ for those who disclose abuse.”

# Authorised Listeners

## Listening to survivors of abuse



## **Authorised Listeners: Listening to survivors of abuse**

Those who have been abused by members of the Church of England, clergy or lay employees, can be put in touch with people who can listen, help and very importantly, believe them.

### **WHAT WE DO**

Provide an attentive and attuned listening ear to assist you in talking about experiences in relation to present or past abuse.

Assist you in considering the next steps, and support you in taking them. Next steps could include reporting abuse to a statutory agency, instigating disciplinary proceedings, seeking counselling, pastoral support or mediation.

Where appropriate, and with your agreement, enable referrals to be made to other professionals.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Client confidentiality will be protected and information will only be shared with the client's express permission.

### **EXCEPTIONS**

Information must be shared if:

There is a risk of harm to the client and the client is deemed unable to protect themselves.

There is a risk of harm to other people (including the Authorised Listener).



The Diocese of Exeter has commissioned this service from First Light



**FIRST LIGHT**

## **WHO WE ARE**

**First Light is a charity offering support to people who have experienced sexual abuse.**

**First Light is commissioned to manage the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service across Devon and Cornwall including the Isles of Scilly.**

**We have a team of ISVAs covering D&C supporting men, women and Children.**

**The ISVAs work with volunteers who are specially trained to listen to survivors of abuse. We believe you.**

**Our role is not to investigate. Our role is to provide effective emotional support and practical help and support you to retake control of your life.**

**We will help you access other appropriate on-going support such as specialist counselling and if you choose to report to the police, we will support you every step of the way.**

**Website: [www.firstlight.org.uk](http://www.firstlight.org.uk)**

**If you are a victim or survivor of abuse (not necessarily proven or substantiated) from within the church community, you can seek a referral.**

**You can do so by contacting the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) directly or indirectly through your Parish Priest or Parish Safeguarding Representative**

**The DSA will speak to you to clarify the request.**

**The DSA will arrange for you to be contacted by an Authorised Listener (AL) within three weeks of the referral.**

**The AL will inform the DSA when the service is no longer required and of any 'next steps' you have agreed that the diocese needs to support.**

**You will be offered three sessions with an Authorised Listener. If additional needs are identified, further help will be provided.**

## CONTACT US

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## OTHER USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

**NAPAC (National Association of People Abused in Childhood) 0808 801 0331 (calls will not show on your bill)**

**The Survivors Trust (a national umbrella organisation)  
[www.thesurvivorstrust.org](http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org)**