

## **Benefice of Winscombe and Sandford with Churchill**

### **WhatsApp Guidelines**

Our Churches have a number of WhatsApp groups which are used to make communication quick and easy.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) must be informed if you intend to create a new group for a Church Group and permission sought from the PCC. The PSO must be a member of the group so that 'chats' can be monitored.

Our main group in Winscombe, Sandford and Churchill is 'Church Matters'.

The purpose of the 'Church Matters' group is to:

- Share information about forthcoming Church Services, activities and fundraising events.
- Share news about events that have taken place.
- Make prayer requests.
- Share information about Christian events locally, online material that supports faith etc.
- Ask for help from the Church family.

**DO** treat each other with respect.

**DO** be mindful of the information you share and the way you share it.

**DO** try to provide some context for requests so that people who might not know you well can understand and engage with your news/ request / update etc.

**DO** share an update on prayer requests after a few days to keep praying or share answers to prayer.

**DON'T** share requests more than once unless there are significant changes in the situation.

**DON'T** reply to messages in the group (e.g. to say you are praying), to prevent an overload of messages and people potentially missing the initial message. Instead, where appropriate to do so, reply directly to the author via their own WhatsApp account with a personal word of encouragement.

**DON'T** share on behalf of others unless they are unable to do so themselves and you have their explicit permission.

**DON'T** use the group for discussing controversial topics that could cause conflict and compromise our unity as a church family.

**DON'T** pass on anyone's mobile telephone number. These have been provided solely for the purpose of belonging to the group and are not to be shared without the express permission of the 'owner'.

**DON'T** post on WhatsApp anything that you wouldn't stand up and share face to face.