

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FIRST-EVER COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARDS: CCPAS HONOURS 29 MEMBERS OF COMMUNITIES, POLICE, SOCIAL SERVICES and CHARITIES**

The Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) has bestowed the first-ever Community Champion Awards. The awards honour 29 leading individuals who have made major contributions towards keeping children safe in African and Caribbean churches. In particular they recognise and honour the huge strides made by many members of such churches over the past few years as they strive to enhance child safeguarding in their communities.

The awards were made in four key categories –

- Community Champion Award - For community champions who are honorary members of CCPAS
- Community Ambassador - For supporting CCPAS to host and arrange child safeguarding training in the community
- Community Service - For members of statutory services such as police and social services who have supported CCPAS in this initiative
- Community Partnership - For individuals in charities that work alongside CCPAS to safeguard children

The full list of winners is attached.

The Community Champion Award scheme is supported by Trust for London, which has funded CCPAS, AFRUCA (Africans United against Child Abuse) Victoria Climbié

Foundation and the Congolese Family Centre in a major preventative project helping them to tackle child abuse.

As many as 500 African majority churches have now received child safeguarding training in the UK from CCPAS.

Next year, CCPAS hopes to build upon the success of the Community Champion awards by launching an annual set of safeguarding awards, as part of 'Safeguarding Sunday'. This will provide resources for churches to promote champions of children and other vulnerable people.

Bob Pull of CCPAS commented: "Church organisations have a critical role in many African and African Caribbean communities, and their leaders and workers have a pivotal role in developing children's rights within them. Just like churches from the wider white community, the majority offer valuable help and support. Sadly, however, some have let their congregations and communities down by failing to provide adequate safeguards in respect of children and vulnerable adults. This has sometimes resulted in children being harmed.

"Together with key members of the Black Christian Communities, frontline workers from children services, police and partner charities, we have risen to this challenge by placing safeguarding centre stage in churches and provided a comprehensive training and long term support programme for literally thousands of people. Given the significant progress in this area, it is a privilege to honour those individuals and groups who are contributing so much in this essential area."

Simon Bass, CEO of CCPAS commented: "We are delighted that so many African churches have so enthusiastically embraced the need for proper safeguarding. However, complacency is the deadly enemy of effective child protection. We will not rest, therefore, until we are confident that children from every background and culture are as safe as they possibly can be in every church and place of worship throughout the country".

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

The Community Champion Awards scheme has kindly been sponsored by Trust for London, as part of its recent major *Safeguarding Children's Rights* project.

CCPAS is an independent Christian charity providing professional child protection advice and support across church denominations and organisations throughout the UK.

CCPAS was established in 1977. It assists churches, organisations, social services and other child care agencies as well as individual children and families by:

- helping churches and other organisations adopt safe practice in order to protect children from abuse – and youth workers from the possibility of false allegations
- advising on individual cases, giving ongoing help to leaders and others.
- training across the UK and providing “in-house” training and other resources
- acting as external consultants to denominational/organisational child protection advisors
- counselling individual adults or children about past or present abuse.

For more information, please see [www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)